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GTA Event, Ceremony Recap
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IAAPA Attractions Expo 2018 to combine fun, biz in Orlando

Association brings centennial year to a celebratory close

AT: *Pam Sherborne*
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ORLANDO, Fla. — The **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions Expo 2018** (IAE) is expected to draw more than 35,000 global amusement park and attractions industry professionals to the **Orange County Convention Center** Nov. 12-16.

That number illustrates just how far IAAPA has come since its founding 100 years ago. At that time, a gathering of park operators led to the creation of a parks division within the newly formed **National Outdoor Showmen's Association**, which became the forerunner of today's IAAPA.

This year's trade show theme, "Fun Forward. Build the Future," makes apparent that the association wants to go even further during the next 100 years.

This year's event promises to deliver a combination of innovation, productive networking, fervent buying and showbiz dazzle. On the educational side, there will be more than 100 sessions and behind-the-scenes educational tours covering a wide range of topics.

The trade show portion of IAE, running Nov. 13-16, will include more than 1,000 exhibiting companies showcasing their latest products and services in 125 different categories across 560,000 net square feet. For the first time, the trade show floor will extend beyond the walls of the convention center into climate-controlled outdoor structures dubbed the "Exploration Station" and created just for the event.

Hal McEvoy, officially installed as president and CEO of IAAPA in October after serving as interim president since February, was anticipating the big event. "We will celebrate the association's 100th anniversary and look ahead to what's next for our industry, our members and the association," he said.

This year's keynote speaker is **Bob Chapek**, chairman of **Walt Disney Parks, experiences and consumer products**, who will deliver his address during the General Managers and Owners Breakfast on Wednesday, Nov. 14. On the same date, **John Lawn**, president and CEO of **Hershey Entertainment and Resorts**, will speak during the Amusement Parks Attractions Constituency Lunch. The Brass Ring Awards will cap the day's special events at 4:30 p.m.

There is plenty of outright fun in store.

On Sunday, Nov. 11, For the first time in IAE history, the Annual IAAPA International Charity Golf Tournament will be held at **Falcon's Fire Golf Club** in Kissimmee. It is expected to get underway at 8 a.m., which is the same time the Ninth Annual IAAPA Charity Motorcycle Ride is set to begin. Both of these events, and a 5K Run / 1 Mile Walk on Thursday, Nov. 15, will benefit **Give Kids the World Village** in Kissimmee.



As it gears up for its trade show, which has a $77 million economic impact on Central Florida annually, IAAPA has named Hal McEvoy president and CEO and is building a striking new headquarters in Orlando. COURTESY IAAPA

Another expected highlight of this year's gathering is "IAAPA Celebrates: IAAPA's Centennial Celebration," set to take place at **Universal Studios Florida** on Thursday, Nov. 15. The presentation, said McEvoy, "will be unlike any other as IAAPA wraps up the association's yearlong centennial celebration."

The show will include entertainment, characters and attractions, as well as a live performance by Canadian rock band **Barenaked Ladies**.

Learning at IAE actually kicks off days ahead of the main action on Saturday, Nov. 10, with the course, "IAAPA Rookies and Newcomers: FEC 101." The three-day session resumes on Sunday, Nov. 11, and Monday, Nov. 12. The first of three seminars presented by the IAAPA Institute for Attraction Managers will be offered on Sunday and continue on Monday and Tuesday, Nov. 13.

Also, on Sunday, the IAAPA Safety Institute will conduct the first of its EDUTours, which will take place at **Fun Spot America Orlando.**

Educational sessions continue through Friday, Nov. 16. Visit iaapa.org for a complete schedule.



IAAPA HQ taking shape

During the planning of this year's IAE, IAAPA staffers have been working in temporary offices in Orlando while their new headquarters, for which ground was broken on a seven-acre site in mid-May, are being built nearby. McEvoy said the new location has already made enhancements to the association.

"Our goal is always to serve our members," he said. "We outgrew our offices in Alexandria (Va.) and knew this

▸ See IAAPA, page 6

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AMUSEMENT VIEWS

***AT* NOTEBOOK:** *Ron Gustafson, Special to* Amusement Today

School start vs. Labor Day



Gustafson

It's never made much sense to many of us in the amusement park business that some states in New England and elsewhere send kids back to school before Labor Day.

After all, Labor Day is considered the close of summer by most, even though the season doesn't end officially until latter September.

As temperatures rose to record highs in New England in late August, the issue of re-opening classrooms before Labor Day also heated up.

New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu announced that he was pushing to delay the start of school in the state, and soon after he signed an executive order to create a commission to study the feasibility of starting the school year after Labor Day. Word had it that a Rhode Island lawmaker was considering a similar proposal.

Here in Connecticut, there's been no inkling of anything similar.

Part of the reasoning seems obvious: After Labor Day, when cooler temperatures generally prevail, everyone can get down to the serious business of teaching and learning instead of sweating to distraction in schools without adequate air conditioning.

In the meantime, many summer businesses continue to take it on the chin as the workforce and much of the business base is swept away to school.

In those states that don't start the school year until September, families get to enjoy their last hurrah in late August

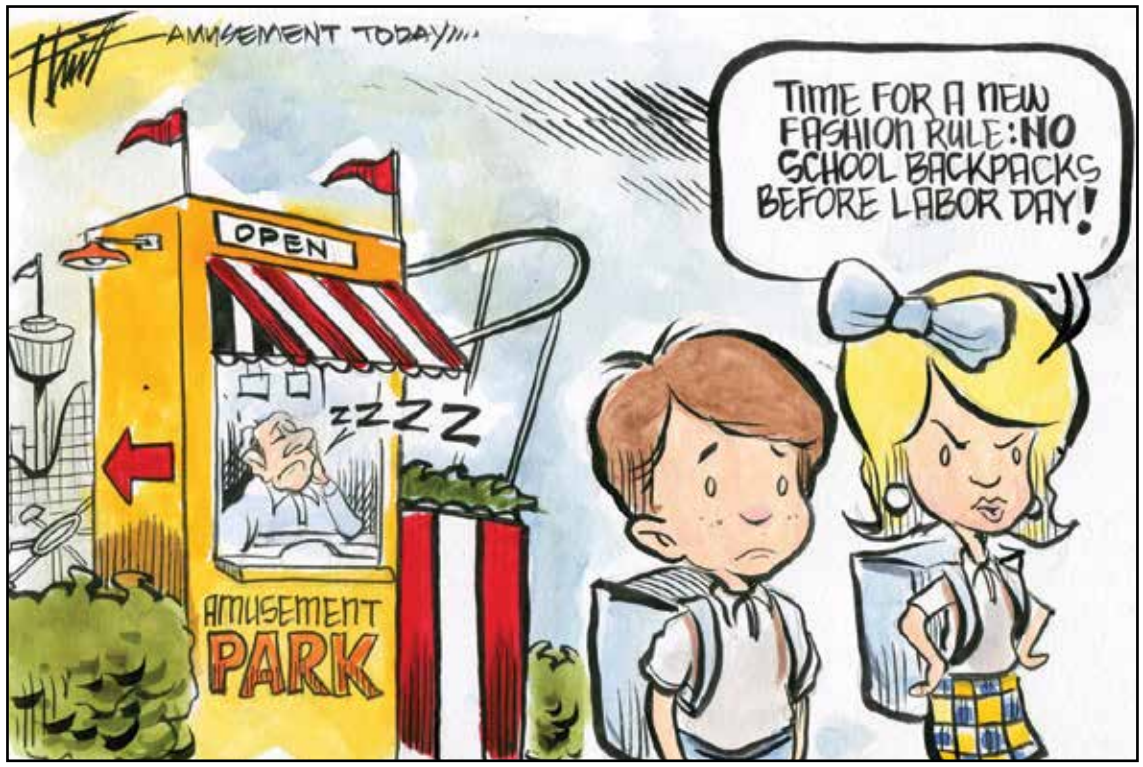
The last full week of August is important not only to amusement operators subject to the whims of the weather, but to tourism as a whole. And this year, that was an extremely busy week at Quassy Amusement Park in Middlebury, Conn.

Our parking lot was filled with out-of-state cars — mostly New Yorkers, since many schools in the state don't resume classes until after Labor Day. And yes, we heard some guests grumbling about other area attractions being closed during what they considered a summer vacation week.

It will be interesting to see what, if anything, transpires in our neighboring states with regard to extending summer recess. Should there be a movement to return to the kind of traditional school calendar baby boomers grew up with, we'll be among the first to endorse it.

Ron Gustafson is the director of marketing and public relations for Quassy Amusement Park

FLINT'S VIEW: *Bubba Flint*



GUEST OPINION: *Andreas Andersen, Chairman of the Board 2018, IAAPA*

Preparing for the future



Anderson

Welcome to November and IAAPA Attractions Expo 2018. What can I begin to say? This year's Expo truly is bigger and better than ever before. We've been working toward it for 100 years. And if we use the size and attendance of this Expo as a benchmark for the health of the global attractions industry, I think we are in pretty good shape.

Of course, we should all be very happy and proud of this fact. More than 35,000 professionals from over 100 countries have come together in Orlando to discuss the business today.

At the same time, we must also prepare for the future. We need to ready our industry, and IAAPA, for times when the wave we are riding now slows down. Because it will one day.

As an *industry* we must make sure we never forget the fundamentals: safety is the foundation we build our businesses on. Employees are the source of our strength, and guest value and loyalty drive our growth.

As an *association*, IAAPA should never forget why we exist: to bring the diverse, dynamic and global attractions family together. This connection, this coming together, is good for us all.

IAAPA's centennial is a year of both celebration and change. Never has it been more important for the association to face the future with a clear direction. We look to IAAPA to have its financial and organizational plans ready to take the association, and its members, into the next 100 years.

I am proud to say we will do all of this. With the 2019 opening of IAAPA's global headquarters in Orlando, the vast and growing infrastructure of regional offices around the world, the association's talented and competent organizational team, and a fresh, strong and contemporary brand, we are certainly preparing for the future.

And we are, here and now, at the Expo. Let's enjoy it together as we celebrate this industry we all love so much. Have a great show!

Andreas Andersen is president and CEO of Liseberg in Gothenburg, Sweden

Opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.

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Give Kids the World Village, Morgan's Wonderland, National Roller Coaster Museum & Archives

2 MINUTE DRILL



AT: Janice Witherow

David Rosenberg, IAAPA Chair / Monterey Bay Aquarium

David Rosenberg is plenty busy as vice president, guest experience, at California's world-famous **Monterey Bay Aquarium**. But he's ready to dive into an additional role as chairman of the board of the **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions** (IAAPA). Rosenberg, the first aquarium representative to hold the position in IAAPA's history, is well-qualified to work with all facets of the attractions industry. He began his career as an intern in the **Walt Disney College Program**, and from there he spent years with **Hyatt Hotel Corp.** before landing at the aquarium in 2007. A known leader in his community, Rosenberg has served on numerous IAAPA boards and committees, and he is highly involved with the **Association of Zoos & Aquariums**. His colleagues describe him as humble and dedicated while lauding his laser focus.



David Rosenberg, vice president, guest experience, at California's Monterey Bay Aquarium, is primed for his additional role as chairman of the board of IAAPA.
COURTESY DAVID ROSENBERG

Number of years in the industry: 25-plus

Best thing about the industry:
The amazing people. It's like one big family!

Favorite amusement ride:
The Giant Dipper roller coaster at **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk** — it's a classic.

If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be…
A sailboat captain in the South Pacific.

Biggest challenge facing our industry:
The limited free time of our guests and our ongoing competition with "screen time."

The thing I like most about amusement / water park season is… The excitement of the families who are on a mission to have fun in the summertime.

If I had to appear on a reality show, it would be… *The Amazing Race*!

I always make sure I do this at the IAAPA Attractions Expo: Shake the hands of our amazing ambassadors and thank them for their dedication to our industry.

Ten years ago, I was…
Changing the diapers of my children.

When I say vacation, you say… The **Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea** — amazing!

The last book I read was…
The Devil in the White City, by Erik Larson.

In one word, living in California is…
Amazing!!!!!!!!

Favorite kind of candy:
Reese's Peanut Butter Cups.

The store I frequent most often is... Costco
(I try and stay away from the free samples!).

The last thing I purchased over $100 was… A new desk for my home office.

Choose one — beer and pretzels or wine and cheese: Wine (**Opus One**) and cheese (**Stilton**).

It's 10 a.m. — where would we typically find you? At the main entrance of the aquarium welcoming the first wave of morning visitors.

The one thing I have always wanted to do, but haven't yet, is… Downhill skiing in the Swiss Alps (I have skied in many other great places in North America… and in Dubai).

On my commute to work, I am… Either on a conference call or listening to '80s music on satellite radio.

My idea of relaxing is… Sitting on the outside deck, which overlooks the golf course of my country club, on Sunday nights with my family and a good glass of wine.

The most interesting person I have ever met would have to be… I've met three U.S. presidents and found them all to be very interesting.

If I could "do over" something from yesterday, it would be… Sleep in longer (yesterday was Sunday).

When my alarm goes off, I… Jump briskly out of bed — I'm a morning person.

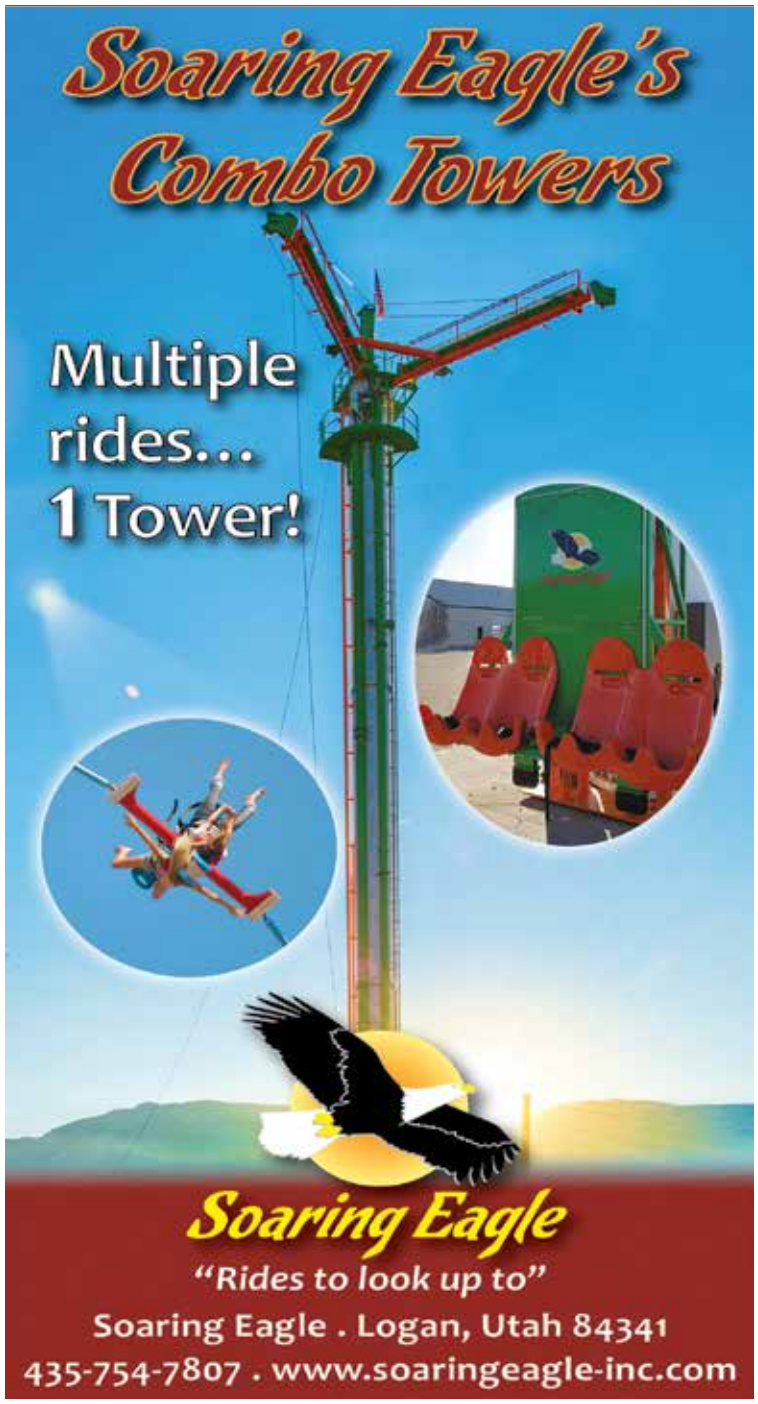
All-time favorite sports moment: The **San Francisco Giants** winning Game 7 of the **World Series** in 2014 (my son was just old enough to appreciate this moment and we both celebrated the victory).

THE INDUSTRY SEEN

Actor brings Hollywood home to Jersey



JACKSON, N.J. — Earlier this fall, actor and New Jersey native Ray Fisher, known for his portrayal of Cyborg / Victor Stone in the hit 2017 film *Justice League*, joined family and friends at Six Flags Great Adventure to experience Cyborg Cyber Spin. The entrance of the gyroscope-inspired thrill ride, which debuted last summer, gave Fisher the perfect heroic photo op.
COURTESY SIX FLAGS GREAT ADVENTURE



IAAPA 2018 – ORLANDO

IAAPA Hall of Fame inducts attractions industry innovators

AMSTERDAM — The **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions** (IAAPA) has inducted four attractions industry innovators from Europe into the **IAAPA Hall of Fame**, which was established in 1990 to honor industry legends and pioneers for their lasting contributions to the growth and development of the global attractions industry.

The inductees were announced during the opening ceremony at **Euro Attractions Show 2018** in Amsterdam on Sept. 25.



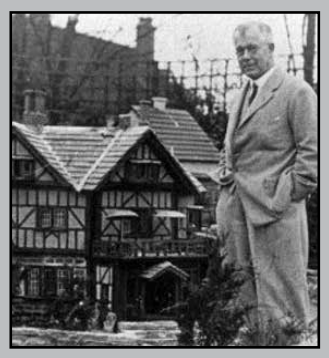
Engineering pioneer Eugenius Birch reinforced seaside piers and turned them into destinations. The Eastbourne Pier was among his projects in Great Britain. COURTESY IAAPA

Eugenius Birch, architect and civil engineer, U.K.

An engineering pioneer, Birch (1818-84) re-engineered seaside piers and transformed them into family entertainment destinations. Prior to Birch's innovations, piers were not durable enough to withstand the sea nor the heavy storms that lashed against them. In 1853, Birch was tasked with creating an amusement pier in Margate near his hometown of London. He fitted screw blades to the bottom of the iron support pilings and screwed them into the ground. With this new approach to engineering the support system, **Margate Pier** survived 125 years until it was torn down in 1978. Birch went on to become the most prolific pier builder in the world, creating 14 piers around Great Britain.

Roland Callingham, creator of Bekonscot, U.K.

The hobbies of miniaturization and modeling have existed in one form or another in England since the 16th century, but in 1927, Callingham (1881-1961) began turning the hobby into a successful visitor attraction. Today, his **Bekonscot Model Village** in Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, is widely recognized as the world's earliest example of a model village and has inspired attractions the world over. Callingham's creativity, originality and sense of whimsy led him to create a 1/12th-scale model village that continued to grow decade after decade, becoming a lifelong project.



Roland Callingham stands amid his U.K. marvel, Bekonscot Model Village. COURTESY IAAPA

Carl Hagenbeck, 'Father of the Modern Zoo,' Germany

In the late 1800s, animals were seen behind iron bars and often in small enclosures with stark living conditions. The vision of Hagenbeck (1844-1913) was to create naturalistic enclosures for animals. He developed panoramas that allowed zoos to showcase multiple species arranged in geographic groupings, yet separated them from each other and observers by natural-looking moats and borders. His ideas became reality in 1907 with the opening of **Tierpark Hagenbeck** in Hamburg. Zoo attendance increased and animal welfare improved. Today, zoo design and animal habitats worldwide still resemble those of Tierpark Hagenbeck, which is owned and operated by the sixth generation of the Hagenbeck family.



Hagenbeck

Peter Rosner, magnetic braking/launch systems, Germany

Two of Dr. Rosner's most revolutionary and far-reaching innovations in the area of thrill rides and roller coasters are linear motorized launch systems and magnetic braking systems. The previous friction-based braking technology for roller coasters caused mechanical brakes to wear out, and weather exposure required ongoing maintenance. Rosner's magnetic braking system provided a solution. In 1995, **Intamin** debuted the Hellevator drop tower at **Kentucky Kingdom** — the first ride to use his magnetic braking system. The fail-safe nature of the magnetic brakes and lack of mechanical wear has allowed ride creators to design rides previously not possible. In 1997, Rosner's linear motor launch system debuted with Superman: The Escape at **Six Flags Magic Mountain**; today, it is commonly used for launched coasters.



Rosner

—Researched by IAAPA

IAAPA

Continued from page 1

was the perfect time to help position IAAPA for the next 100 years. IAAPA is a growing association that supports a dynamic industry, and Orlando has always been considered the epicenter of the attractions industry.

"The relocation is an investment in the association, our members and our industry. By being closer, we are more in touch with the industry and we have been able to hire employees with industry backgrounds."

Since January 2017, McEvoy noted, IAAPA has hired more than 30 Orlando-based positions.

Construction on IAAPA's new 22,000-square-foot global headquarters, budgeted at $14 million, is ramping up. McEvoy had expected to see steel work begin in October.

"We are on track to move into the building in Summer 2019, and we look forward to welcoming our members there any time they are in Orlando."

The new IAAPA headquarters will feature a unique exterior wave pattern representing the constant and dynamic movement of the attractions industry. Inside, the building will have aesthetic elements including three different ceiling heights throughout, beginning with a 21-foot-high entry. Other features include a dedicated member space with meeting rooms, spaces for educational seminars and special events.

"The headquarters is designed to be a place for our members to connect with the IAAPA team and fellow industry colleagues," McEvoy said.

Meanwhile, IAAPA continues to extend its reach worldwide.

Aside from the Orlando headquarters, the association now has regional offices in Brussels, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Mexico City and Alexandria, Va.

"We are continuing to look at locations to help us better reach and serve our members," McEvoy said. "In the next year, we are working on a stronger presence in the Middle East."

ISAP launched in 2018

Earlier this year, IAAPA launched the **IAAPA Security Advisory Program** (ISAP) as a member opt-in pilot program.

"As the industry voice for safety, advocacy and government relations, we strive to constantly provide new products, services, and information to help keep our members informed about issues facing our industry," McEvoy said. "This pilot program is meant to provide helpful and timely communication regarding security issues around the world that could impact members."

Through the use of email, the IAAPA Security Advisory Program provides real-time alerts about situations and issues that could affect the security of member facilities and the communities in which they operate. Those issues range from natural disasters and power outages to hazardous material events and security activities.

Based on the information in the email messages, members can determine if the situation could impact their business and if action is warranted.

McEvoy pointed to ISAP as an example of how the attractions industry is creating, innovating and evolving. "We are seeing technology applied in many new ways," he said.

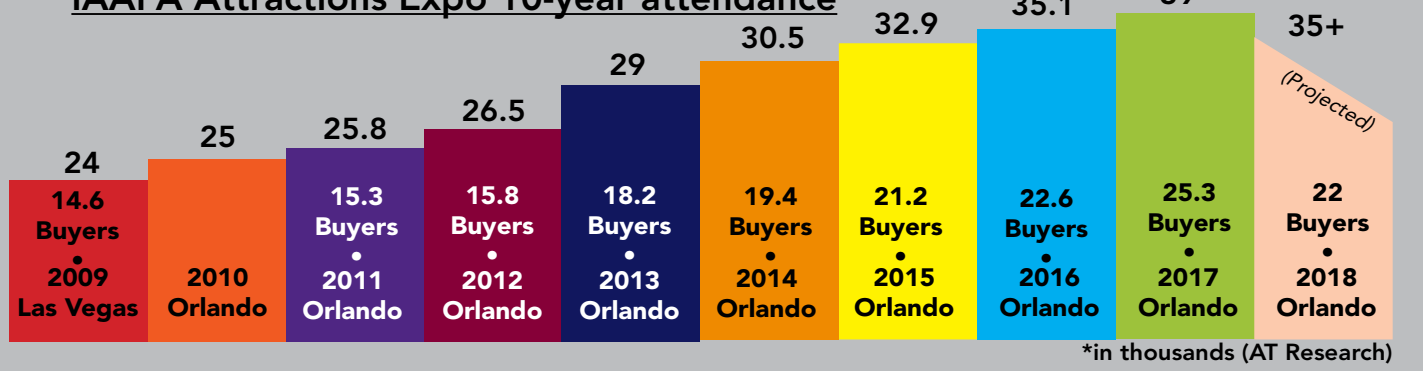
McEvoy noted the rise of sustainability in the business. Examples are on-site solar farms, enhanced recycling programs (both back-of-house and guest-facing) and continued efforts to reduce single-use plastics, such as drinking straws and plastic bags. The initiative includes working with vendors on more environmentally friendly merchandise packaging.

• iaapa.org

FASTFACTS

IAAPA Attractions Expo

IAAPA Attractions Expo 10-year attendance*



*in thousands (AT Research)



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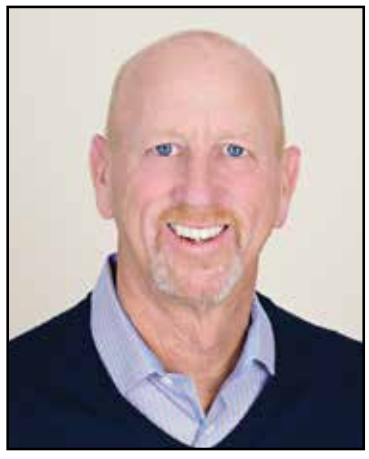
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IAAPA 2018 – ORLANDO

IAAPA's Euro Attractions Show in Amsterdam a record-breaker

AT: *Dean Lamanna*
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com





Euro Attractions Show 2018 drew a record 15,800 attendees to the Amsterdam RAI Exhibition and Conference Center. Ken Whiting, president of Whiting's Foods, Inc., was elected IAAPA's second vice chair during the event. COURTESY IAAPA EMEA; IAAPA (WHITING)

AMSTERDAM — **Euro Attractions Show 2018** (EAS), hosted by the **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions** (IAAPA) Sept. 25-27 at the **Amsterdam RAI Exhibition and Convention Centre**, was one for the record books.

The event set new EAS records for number of exhibiting companies (570), exhibit floor size (15,000 square meters) and total number of participants (15,800) — the latter number reflecting a 24 percent increase over EAS 2017 in Berlin.

"We were excited to bring EAS back to Amsterdam during IAAPA's 100th anniversary," said **Jakob Wahl**, vice president of IAAPA Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA). "Our members love the city, and so do we. This year marks the first time we hit over 15,000 attendees, reflecting the strength of the location and, of course, the strength of the global attractions industry."

Mona Keijzer, Dutch State Secretary for Economy and Sustainability, addressed attendees during the event's opening ceremony at **Strand Zuid**, which also included entertainment from some of the Netherlands' top parks and attractions. **Coen Bertens**, park director and member of the board of directors of **Efteling**, was the keynote speaker at the Leadership Breakfast.

More than 2,500 attendees participated in EAS 2018's extensive conference program, which included in-depth learning experiences, local attractions tours, discussion forums and seminars. Topics covered included industry trends, safety, sustainability, technology, group sales, retailtainment and marketing.

During the event, on Sept. 23, IAAPA's board of directors elected **Ken Whiting**, ICAE, second vice chairman of the Orlando-based association. Whiting, president of Santa Cruz, Calif.-based **Whiting's Foods, Inc.**, will begin serving in his new role in 2019. He will become first vice chair in 2020 and lead IAAPA as chairman of the board in 2021.

"I'm humbled, honored and excited to serve the global attractions industry as IAAPA's second vice chair," said Whiting, an award-winning, four-decade attractions industry veteran who currently leads the faculty of the IAAPA Institute for Attractions Mangers. "It's an exciting time to be part of this amazing and vibrant industry as we continue to see tremendous growth across a wide range of constituencies in regions throughout the world. Along with the IAAPA Board of Directors, IAAPA leadership and dedicated volunteers, I look forward to contributing to the industry's continued success."

EAS, owned and produced by IAAPA, is the largest conference and trade show dedicated to the attractions industry in the EMEA region. EAS is managed by the IAAPA EMEA office under the direction of the IAAPA EMEA Regional Advisory Committee and the IAAPA EMEA Manufacturers and Suppliers Subcommittee.

Euro Attractions Show 2019 will be held in Paris at the **Paris Expo Porte de Versailles**, Sept. 15-19.

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IAAPA 2018 – ORLANDO

2018 IAAPA Attractions Expo exhibitor listing

List is current as of Oct. 9, 2018. For last-minute changes, booth additions and cancellations, consult the IAAPA show directory.

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3D Electronic Technology Co., Ltd. 751
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5 Hour Energy 3756
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A.R.M. (USA), Inc. 8835
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ACE Amusement Technologies Co., Ltd. 4154
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Amusement Products, LLC 5117
Amusement Resources 1618
Amusement Supply Co. 5566
Amusement Supply Company 4269
Amusement Today **4215**
Amusements International 4604
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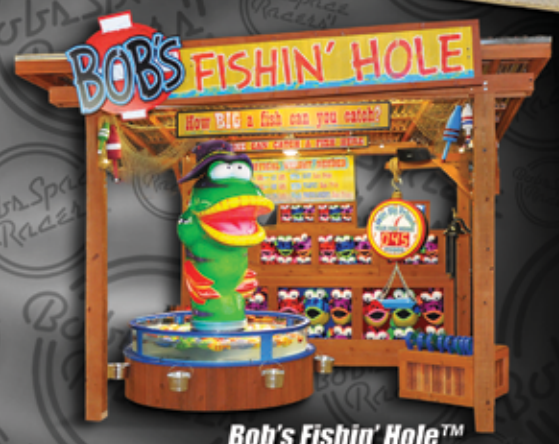


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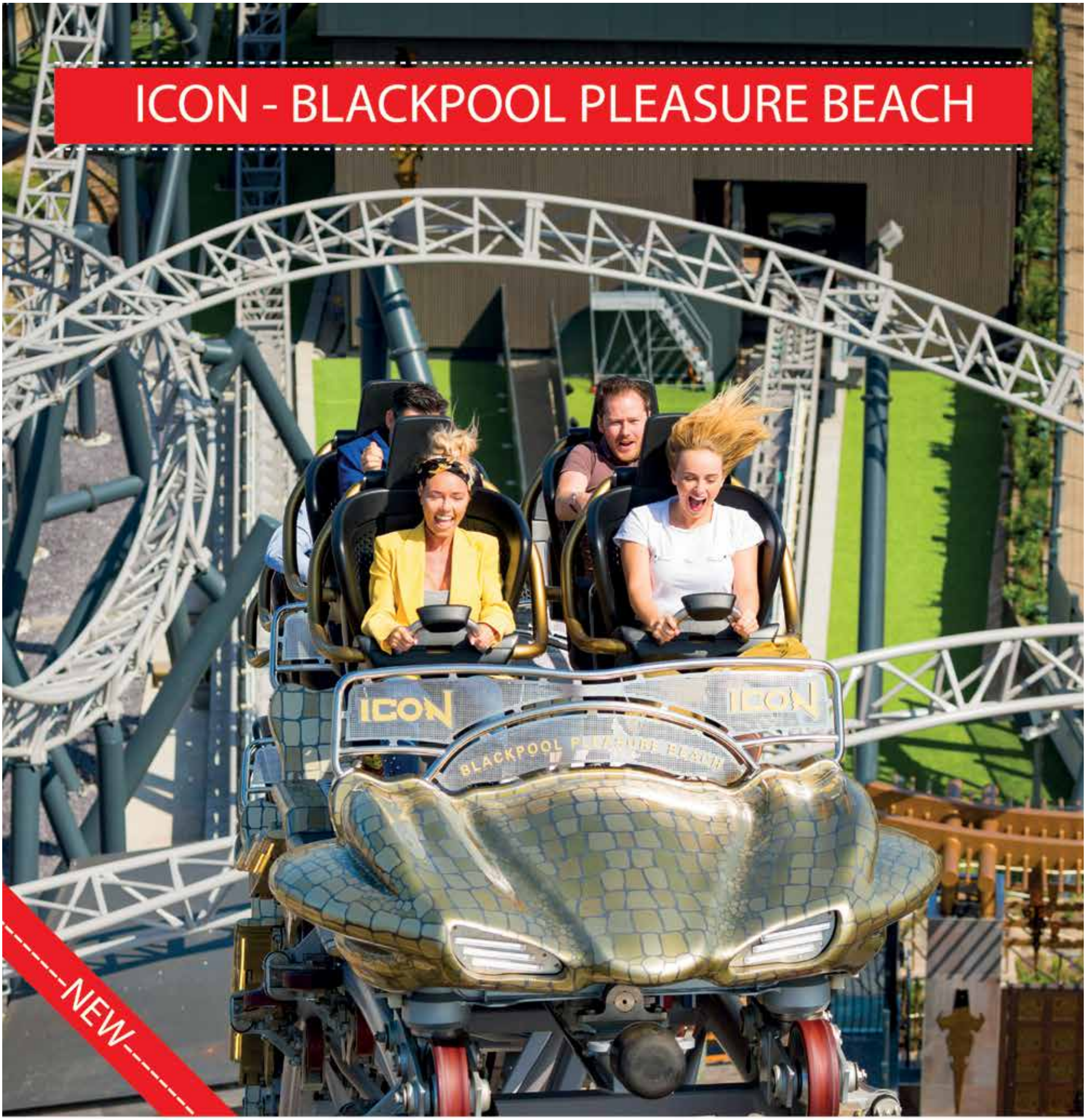
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Fun Spot America kicks up some dust, expands in Georgia

AT: *Pam Sherborne*
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FAYETTEVILLE, Ga. — Guests at **Fun Spot America Atlanta** have been putting more pedals to the metal since Aug. 3, the day the park's new 40-foot-tall, 1,800-foot-long go-kart track came on line.

And it didn't take long for Fun Spot's owners to realize they had a hit. They saw a 90 percent increase in operating income between 2017 and 2018.

"The response has been overwhelmingly positive, with a lot of return ridership," said **John Arie, Jr.**, CEO of the facility. "If they get on for the first time and then get right back on after they just rode, then we know we have a home run."

The Arie family owns and operates this park as well as two other Fun Spot America locations in Orlando and Kissimmee, Fla., and are celebrating 20 years in business with the brand, which was started by John Arie, Sr. They purchased the Georgia property in mid-2017.

Since then, the family has been very busy. Not only was the go-kart track, called Samson, constructed and opened this past season, a new Ferris wheel from **Technical Park** was installed and renovations were begun on a 45,000-square-foot arcade

Samson is the third and largest go-kart track at the Atlanta facility. It is the first track John Arie, Jr., designed without assistance from his dad.

"This track intertwines with itself many times," Arie said. "It is the tallest track we've ever built and has the longest span, pole to pole, we've ever done. There are 44 feet in the longest span."

The multilevel course, which incorporates 90 tons of steel, has three helixes and three exhilarating dips.

"I think the more you do with the design of the track, the more people like it," Arie said.

Arie noted that the track was built with engineering help from **Harry Brumley**, president of **HB Associates, LLC**, of Altamonte Springs, Fla., with whom Fun Spot America has worked for 20 years.



Fun Spot America Atlanta unveiled Samson, a multilevel go-kart track, on Aug. 3. The ride was designed in-house by park CEO John Arie, Jr., with an engineering assist from HB Associates. COURTESY FUN SPOT AMERICA

The vehicles are from **Shaller Mfg.** of Schulenburg, Texas, another longtime Fun Spot America supplier. There are 16 singles and eight doubles on the track currently. "We might have to add more doubles due to high demand," Arie said.

The go-karts are driven by a motor located on the rear left tire, which is on the outside going up inclines. Arie explained that this design enables the cars to ascend the track at a faster speed than being driven from the inside tire, and it ensures that they will make it up the incline.

"Atlanta residents have never had an elevated track before, so the word of mouth is spreading rapidly," Arie said. "I am very happy with the smiles getting off the track and the high fives everyone is giving one another."

Fun Spot Atlanta's new Ferris wheel also has drawn a great response this season. Arie said the ride was purchased from **PBJ Happee Days Shows** in a deal brokered through **Len Soled** of **Rides 4-U**.

"It's a portable ride, but we are happy that it is," he said. "We bought it on June 21 of this year and it was operational on June 29."

In July, Arie said they had the opportunity to move that wheel to a location near the coast just for the winter season. However, near the end of September, Arie said business was still so good with the wheel at the park that he was not sure they would be moving it.



The wheel stands about 72 feet tall (22 meters), with 16 enclosed, lighted gondolas. Arie said the ride's multihued LED lighting package was installed by the manufacturer.

In addition, Arie said renovations have begun on the park's 45,000-square-foot arcade, where the existing indoor play structure is being replaced with a used set of **Majestic** bumper boats. The play structure has been donated to a local non-profit organization.

"We also have plans to bring three kiddie rides inside that have been outside," Arie said. "This is in hopes of extending our season to weekends throughout the winter."

Fun Spot America Atlanta offers more than a dozen rides and attractions in addition to those mentioned above, including three miniature golf courses.

• fun-spot.com





This Ferris wheel from Technical Park, another addition to Fun Spot America Atlanta this past season, stands 72 feet and has 16 gondolas. COURTESY FUN SPOT AMERICA



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Dynamic Attractions to 'reanimate' historic site

VANCOUVER — The **Britannia Mine Museum**, a nonprofit tourist and educational destination, has revealed the concept designs for a major upcoming attraction. The immersive, multisensory experience promises to enliven the 20-story **Mill** building, a National Historic Site.

Launching next spring, the attraction will tell the story and convey the wide-ranging importance of the structure when it was fully operational from the 1920s until its closing in 1974.

"We are excited to unveil the designs of our new Mill show and share the significant role [the building] played in the history and economic success of British Columbia and Canada," said **Kirstin Clausen**, executive director of the Britannia Mine Museum. "The show will transport visitors back in time for an authentic, thrilling, visceral and acoustic experience, taking advantage of the sheer mass and awe of the Mill building."

A National Historic Site and one of the last remaining gravity-fed concentrator mills in North America, the Mill building is a stepped, hillside-hugging edifice that has been the symbol of Britannia throughout the years. When it was operating, the Mill received raw ore from 200 kilometers of underground tunnels and produced copper and zinc concentrates to be shipped elsewhere for processing into metals. It was a beacon of economic well-being for the communities surrounding Howe Sound.

The Britannia Mine was the largest copper producer in the British Empire in the late 1920s. Rehabilitated in 2007, the Mill building's 14,416 panes of glass were hand-puttied into their frames to maintain the structure's heritage.

The site's new show incorporates the work of Port Coquitlam-based **Dynamic Attractions**, builder of some of the world's most iconic and award-winning theme park attractions. The company, which employs approximately 350 innovative engineers, precision fabricators and other specialists, has created ride systems and related products for clients in the U.S., Asia, the Middle East and Europe, but never in Canada.

Dynamic Attractions will be engineering and fabricating a movable skip (ore-hoisting railcar) for the Mill show — demonstrating how mining equipment was hauled up and down the massive Mill building.

"The Britannia Mine Museum is such a unique tourist attraction, and the Mill show will bring a new, exciting way for people to experience it," said **Hao Wang**, president of Dynamic Attractions. "This project has captured our imagination, and we believe it will be thrilling for guests. We're also looking forward to working on a local project, close to home, with the museum's brilliant team."

The Britannia Mine Museum provides fun, memorable experiences for visitors of all ages, including educational exhibits, an underground mine train, gold panning, a machine shop and the Beaty-Lundin Visitor Centre, where they can learn about Britannia's history.

The Mill show experience and additional rehabilitation of the museum's infrastructure were made possible by a $1.4 million funding contribution by the Government of Canada under its New Building Canada Fund, alongside another $2.8 million the museum has raised from British Columbia's mining industry and the Provincial Government of British Columbia. **Vista Collaborative Arts** is the production company behind the Mill show.

Open seven days a week, the Britannia Mine Museum offers guided tours throughout the day. Learn more at britanniaminemuseum.ca.

—Dean Lamanna





Dynamic Attractions is contributing its engineering expertise to a new multisensory show inside the Britannia Mine Museum's 20-story Mill building, a National Historic Site dating back to the 1920s.
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2018 could be the dawning of a new age at Bay Beach

AT: *Pam Sherborne*
psherborne@amusementtoday.com



Bay Beach added a new westbound train which complements the existing eastbound train line. It is seen here with (l to r) the park's Britney Burkhart-LaBar, special facilities assistant manager, and Jason Arnoldi, special facitilities manager. AT/GARY SLADE

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Green Bay community leaders would like to bring the community back to the water. With additions and renovations completed and underway at **Bay Beach Amusement Park,** that 100-year-old-plus, park will be the doorway to the water for the community once again. This is a comfortable role, and expectations are that it will reach beyond the Green Bay community.

Jason Arnoldi, park manager, is definitely excited about what is happening in the park. This year alone, the park installed a new westbound train line and a new concession stand. A new **Chance** Giant Wheel will open at the beginning of 2019.

In addition, planning is already underway for a new boardwalk, a new 400-foot-long viewing platform (pier), more sand on the beach and swimmers in the water. That is expected to be completed by 2020. There hasn't been swimming there since 1933.

"The water used to be the major draw here," Arnoldi said. "There was a pier that went 500 feet out into the water. People used to get on a steamboat from a port in town and it would dock at the end of the pier. There were bath houses out over the water. There was a Shoot the Chute that went into the water."

The City of Green Bay is located at the mouth of the Fox River. Bay Beach Amusement Park, which dates back to the 1890s, is located on Green Bay. Green Bay runs into Lake Michigan.

As industry grew in the area, those industries located along the Fox River were discharging contaminants into the river. That pollution caused the closure of the Bay Beach beach in 1933. Swimming in the bay was strictly forbidden by 1943.

"It is much cleaner now," Arnoldi said. "There has been cleaning of the river, and testing has continued over the years."

Testing now shows the water to be safe.

The new train line added this year is a westbound line. The existing eastbound train line takes guests the length of the water front, around the park and back again. The new westbound line takes guests under the Zippin Pippin roller coaster, around a different part of the park and brings guests back to the depot.

Bay Beach park has four trains and during very busy times, they ran two trains on each line this past season.

Two of the trains are **Allan Herschell** trains, one purchased in 1955 and the other 1968. These two trains have been in storage the last three years undergoing general maintenance and repairs.

The other two were donated to Bay Beach in 2015 by the **Wolbing** family. One, the Centennial, was manufactured by **Custom Locomotive** of Chicago. Arnoldi said they don't know the manufacturer of the other, which the park calls the Sante Fe.

"We haven't been able to find a plate on it to tell us," he said.



The Zippin Pippin roller coaster opened in 2011. The original plans and coaster were purchased from Libertyland in Memphis. None of the old parts, however, were used on the coaster in Bay Beach, which was built by Martin & Vleminckx. AT/GARY SLADE

Arnoldi expects the new Chance Wheel to arrive on the grounds in January. The wheel will have 20 gondolas and stand anywhere from 90 to 100 feet tall depending on the height of the pilings.

Bay Beach has 23 rides now. Admission is free and parking is free. Ride tickets cost 25 cents a piece. The Zippin Pippin roller coaster takes four tickets, the most of any other ride.

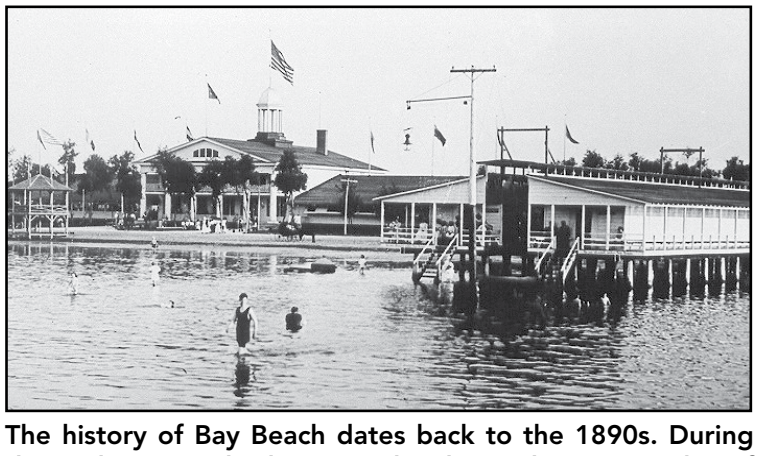
"We really try to keep all of our rides and food very affordable for the community," Arnoldi said.

Arnoldi said the park has been making profits for a long time. He has been there for 25 years. But, before 2012, those profits were going into the city's general fund making it very difficult for the park to get any funding back from that.

"It is sort of hard to compete against road improvements," he said.

In 2012, Bay Beach's fund was moved into a separate account. Other funding sources for improvements come from city bonds and donations raised by the Friends of Bay Beach, a non-profit fund-raising organization. Bay Beach park doesn't use any tax dollars.

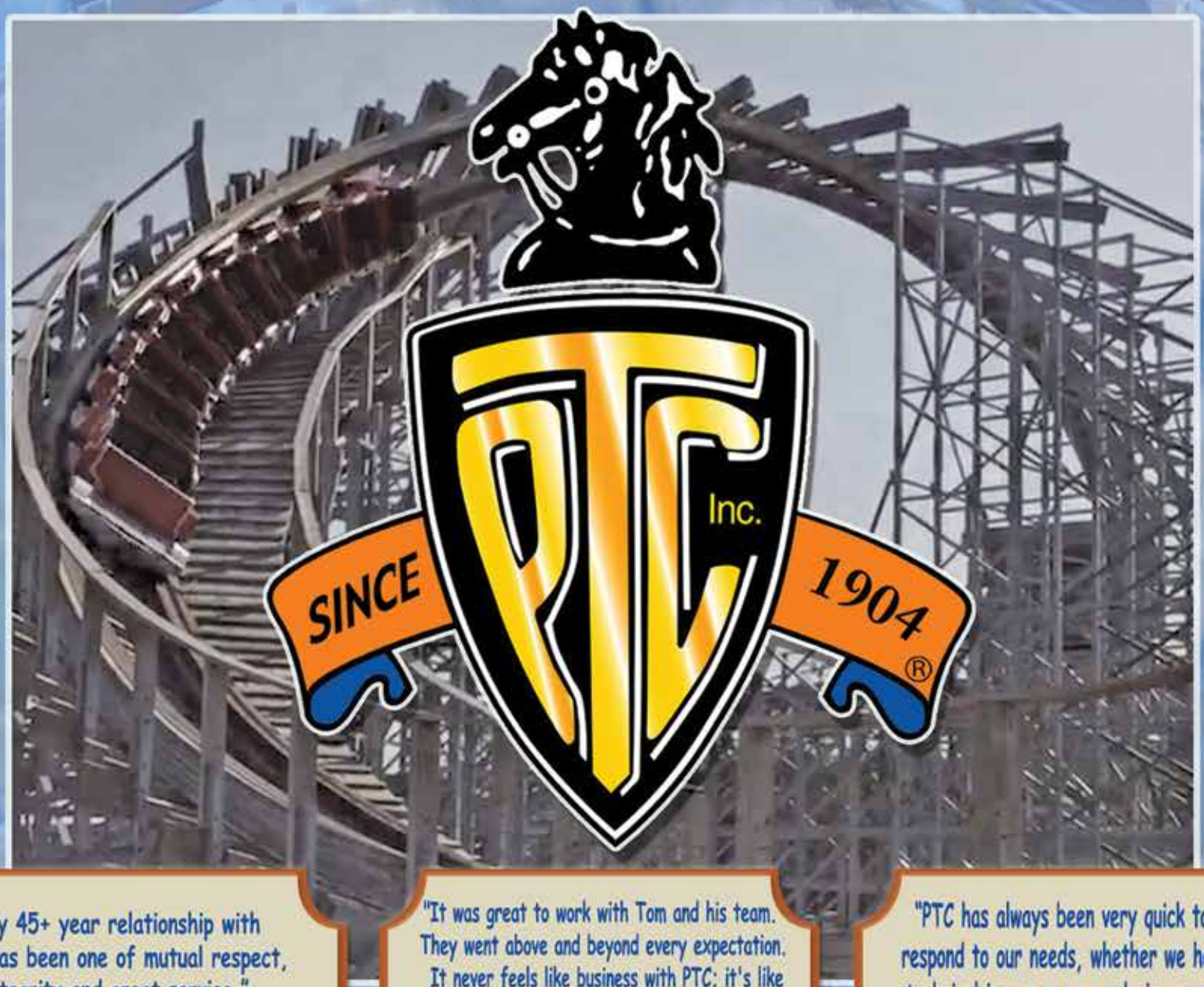
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The history of Bay Beach dates back to the 1890s. During the early years, the bay was the draw. There was a lot of swimming and a Shoot the Chute that went out into the water. The bath houses were built over the water. COURTESY BAY BEACH



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Funtime reaches for the stars with largest swing ride

Orlando StarFlyer becomes instant icon on bustling I-Drive

AT: *Tim Baldwin*
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ORLANDO, Fla. — Big, flashy rides are no stranger to Orlando and the city's International Drive. The famed, heavily trafficked street filled with restaurants and diversions added another this past summer.

Orlando StarFlyer is the tourist corridor's latest razzle-dazzle eye-catcher. Built by Austria-based **Funtime** and represented by **Ride Entertainment** of Stevensville, Md., the new swing ride hits a record height — the tower is 450 feet — and does so with added flair.

The attraction's general manager, **Ritchie Armstrong**, isn't wild about heights. But he can be coaxed onto the StarFlyer for the sake of publicity, so he accompanied *Amusement Today* for a spin.

"The ride cycle is about three to four minutes," he said as the ride began to whirl and rise. "It varies slightly because it's a very clever piece of equipment. It returns to what we call 'zero,' which means it takes you back to the same place where you left your articles."

The StarFlyer swings riders approximately 320 to 330 feet in the air. The attraction represents an investment totaling about $10 million.

The ride's ornate top decoration came from a design drawn on a napkin in 2007 and never used until now. "We put it away until a special occasion, and we thought being that this was the world's tallest [swing ride] and we were going to be operating it ourselves, we decided to bring [the design] out of the closet," said Armstrong, who has been with Funtime for 18 years.

The grounds around the ride are done artistically. Radiating bands of color spread out to benches positioned for onlookers, and custom-built sculptures accent the plaza. There are several tenants around the plaza, as well, including a pretzel and ice cream shop.

Industry observers might feel that, with another, smaller StarFlyer ride operating just a few blocks over on International Drive at **Magical Midway Thrill Park**, installing a bigger version so close could be risky.

"The Funtime group is part of the Slingshot group here in Florida," said Armstrong, explaining his company's involvement in the nearby amusement location. "That [smaller model] was the second-ever StarFlyer built. It's now 17 years old and it's done a fantastic job for us. In our long-term plans, we will change that to something else and that will make us revamp that park."

The Orlando StarFlyer's lighting package, which creates captivating LED patterns that help lure potential nighttime customers, is from **Maxtron**. Although Armstrong said 80 percent of the ride's business is at night, he is extremely pleased with daytime ticket sales.

"We don't wait until full capacity," he said. "If there's only two people in line, we'll operate with two people. The nighttime is very busy, though."

• starflyer.com







The 450-foot Orlando StarFlyer has a mesmerizing light package from Maxtron. Festive sculptures accent the plaza at the base of the ride, which sports a decorative top piece designed more than a decade ago and never built until a special project called for its use. AT/TIM BALDWIN



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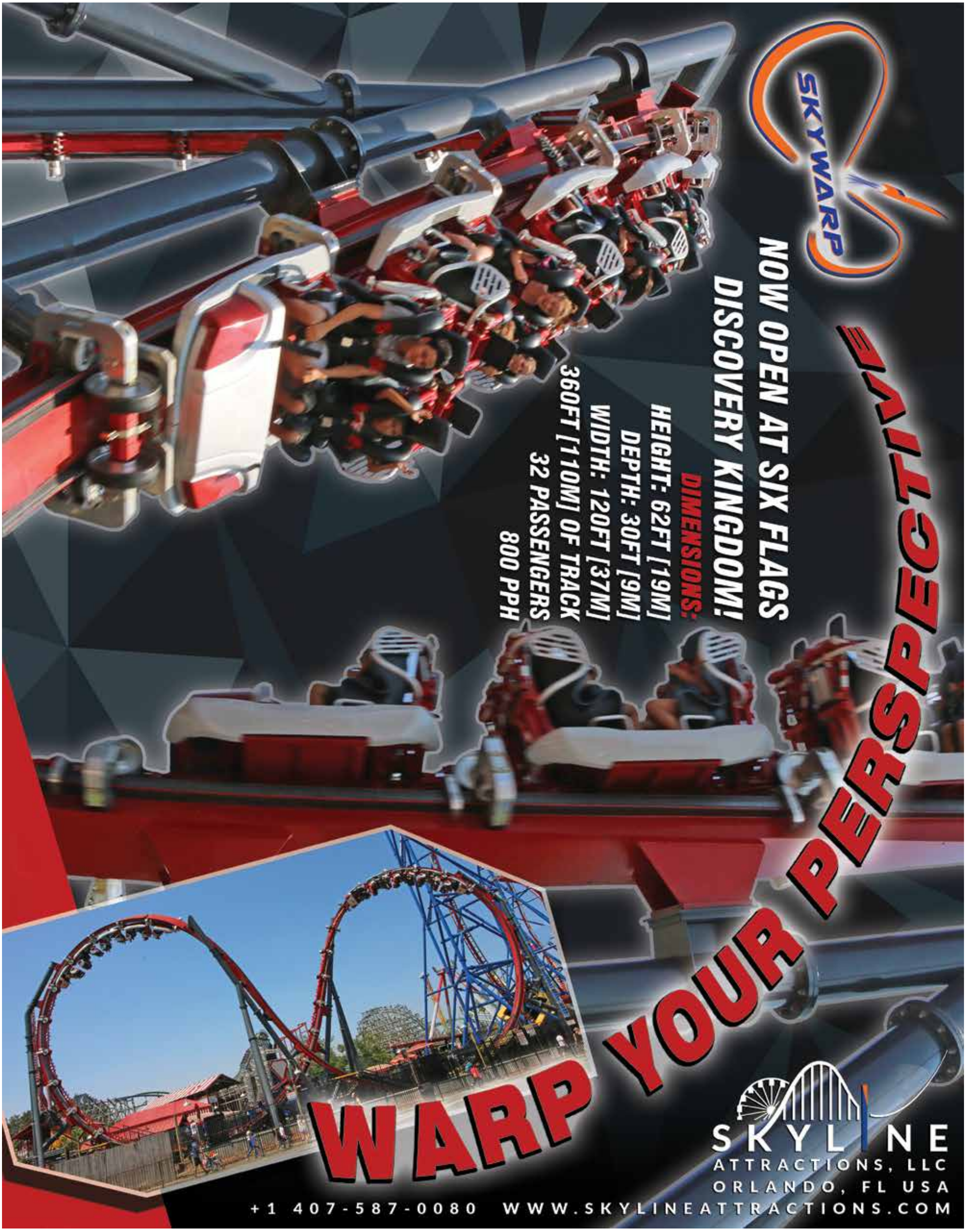
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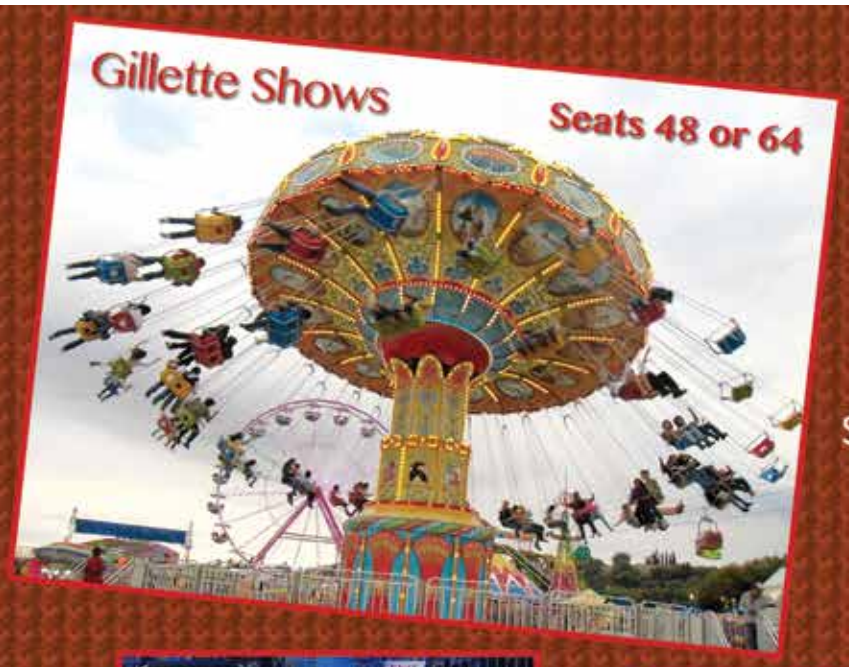
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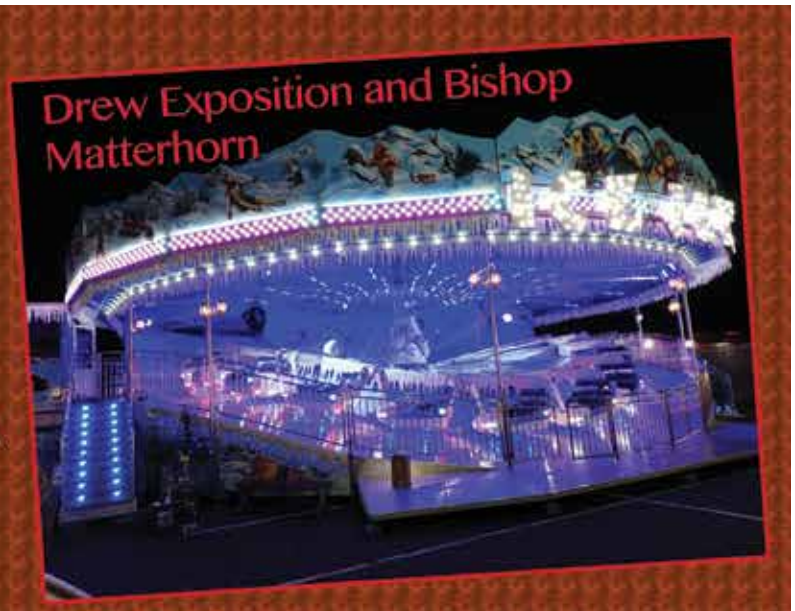
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SeaWorld San Antonio marks 30th anniversary, looks to future

AT: *Tim Baldwin*
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — A brushy piece of Texas Hill Country on the edge of San Antonio was transformed into the city's first theme park when its gates swung open on April 15, 1988, with a grand opening celebration the following May 28.

Originally debuting as **Sea World of Texas**, the property, offering an array of entertainment in one location, became known as **SeaWorld San Antonio** in 1999. What was at the time the fourth in the line of Sea World parks, the 250-acre park was the largest marine life park ever built. The destination has grown into a much larger development: a bigger and better theme park, the Aquatica water park and Discovery Point, an interactive experience that lets guests swim in the very waters alongside marine animals.

The city of San Antonio has experienced tremendous growth in the past three decades. So much so that the city now boasts two theme parks. Sea World of Texas was positioned in a sparsely populated area when it opened in 1988, but today SeaWorld San Antonio is surrounded by neighborhoods, restaurants and developed highways.

"SeaWorld really helped put San Antonio on the map," said **Carl Lum**, park president. "San Antonio is a very vibrant destination. All this started after the Worlds Fair was here. SeaWorld helped draw a lot of interest to the city. It's a wonderful place to live and a wonderful place to visit. SeaWorld help put it on the map."

Since its opening day, guests have admired the striking entrance to SeaWorld with its towering glass arches. It is one of the more impressive entrances to any park.



Towering glass arches have made for a dramatic entrance into SeaWorld for more than three decades. AT/TIM BALDWIN



A Christmas festival is just one of many events to take place throughout the year. For 2018, the park will increase its number of lights to nine million, the largest in Texas. COURTESY SEAWORLD

The opening year of the park took Texas by storm. The Sea World brand was a recognizable enough name at the time, but images of Shamu drew more than 3 million fans to San Antonio in the opening year. To continue offering a diverse lineup of entertainment, many attractions have since been added.

Rides began taking more of a significant role with the addition of Rio Loco (a rapids ride) and Texas Splashdown (a log flume) in 1991. These were the first rides ever in a SeaWorld park. In 1997, The Great White was the first roller coaster in any SeaWorld park and the first **Bolliger & Mabillard** coaster to be built in Texas. It was followed by the Steel Eel megacoaster (**Morgan Manufacturing**) a mere two years later which continued to add the thrill ride factor to the family-friendly environment.

The San Antonio facility was also the first SeaWorld to offer a water park. Lost Lagoon opened in 1993 and was included free with admission to SeaWorld. In 2012, following the success of **Aquatica** in Orlando, the San Antonio water park was reimagined into the second Aquatica. The rebranding came with animal encounters, lush landscaping and a more colorful resort experience. Aquatica became a stand-alone second gate.

Discovery Point opened in 2016 as a third entertainment option. While admission is technically free when visiting SeaWorld, reservations and an additional charge are required to swim and interact with dolphins and various marine life. Spectators can enter and watch from the perimeter and through glass walls for underwater viewing. Discovery Point was an encapsulated version of Orlando's **Discovery Cove**, which is an all-day experience. The recent addition was landscaped with more than 7,000 plants of 80 different species.

Josie Villela, associate manager of communications, has been with SeaWorld San Antonio throughout its entire history. "Opening day was one of those surreal things. After all that time, there was nothing here, and then we had the buildings and theaters and everything. It was exciting. It was such a fun day just to see it come into reality," she told *Amusement Today*.

Sea World of Texas was the fourth marine life park to be built by the company. "Every time you do something, you absolutely learn things, such as marine systems," said Lum. Villela comments on the various festivals that keep guests returning. "Halloween and Christmas are big favorites with my family, but I really like Christmas. This year we have added Beer Fest. It was a great addition," she said.

"We've been doing [the Seven Seas Food and Wine Festival] here for four years. That was an event I started in Williamsburg seven years ago," said Lum. "My inspiration for that was Tivoli Gardens. It just struck me how many restaurants were there and how families were enjoying eating. We did that event and it was a home run. We had other [industry] peers even come visit. Our culinary people really work hard and put a lot into it. Now every park in our company has a food and wine event."

Lum admitted he was pitching in to help install the lights for Christmas. The park's festival will expand from displays of 8 million lights in the past to 9 million for 2018. "We have solar power trees in our lake. Most guests can't see the solar panels below, but anything we can do to help the environment is great. It makes the lights easier to install when that time comes," he said.

While not as heavy on rides as some theme parks, SeaWorld San Antonio has worked with numerous ride manufacturers. **Intamin**, **Mack**, **ProSlide**, **WhiteWater**, **Zamperla** and **Zierier** have provided attractions in addition to B&M and Morgan Manufacturing.

"The balance of shows, rides, festivals and animals is very important," said Lum. "Everyone in the family has something they can enjoy. You see a lot more of that in what we are doing."

During the summer celebration, the park debuted the chain's first Sesame Street Parade.

"This parade launched at our sister park **Sesame Place** in Langhorne, Pennsylvania, and it is a huge hit. People love it," said **Sharon Aguillen**, vice president of entertainment, SeaWorld San Antonio. "It's created a whole new energy in the park."

Meeting all the animals and getting an up-close connection has been one of Villela's most rewarding experiences in her 30-plus years with the park. "That, even more than the rides, for me

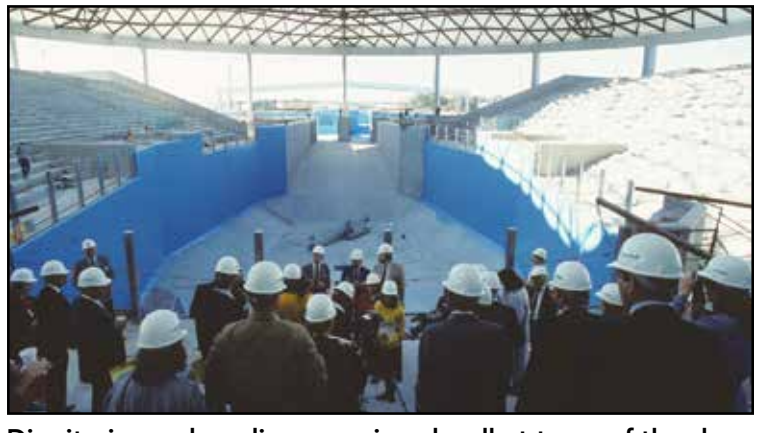
▸ **See SEAWORLD, page 31**



Wave Breaker, by Intamin, incorporated a rescue theme into the coaster experience. AT/TIM BALDWIN



Texas Splashdown was one of two water rides installed in 1991 and among the first rides to be constructed in a SeaWorld park. AT/GARY SLADE



Dignitaries and media were given hardhat tours of the show stadium under construction in the late 1980s. COURTESY SEAWORLD

SEAWORLD

Continued from page 30

has been a great, memorable experience," she said.

The park's dedication to animal rescue and conservation remains front and center. A new 126,000-gallon Turtle Reef encounter in 2019 will continue that mission. When the park announced next year's plans, the details were "shelled out" to focus on sea turtles.

"Back in January, we had a rare snowfall here," said Lum. "We sent folks to Corpus Christi to help rescue cold-stunned turtles. We worked with **Texas Marine Science Institute** in Port Aransas. When their health improved we could release them. Our new Turtle Reef exhibit will feature a partnership with the Marine Science Institute. It will have an innovative plant-based filtration system. It really doesn't cost more to do that, but it is better for the environment. Overall, it's more efficient and less cost. It's a win-win."

In addition to the turtle habitat, two rides from **Huss** and Zamperla will offer family-friendly thrills while being encompassed into the turtle rescue theme.



Aquatica reimagined the park's water park into a more immersive experience with animals and tropical environments. AT/JEFFREY SEIFERT





In 1997, Claude Mabillard, SeaWorld VP Keith Kasen and Consign VP Werner Surber took a ride on The Great White upon its opening (left). The new Sesame Street Party Parade (right) was a huge hit for the 30th anniversary season. AT/GARY SLADE; TIM BALDWIN

For the park's 30th anniversary, SeaWorld has switched all the park music back to 1980s music. "Why not," said Aguillen. "People are loving it!"

Earlier in the season the park hosted a reunion luncheon. "People came from all over," said Villela. "It was great to see them and catch up. That was fun. Some were local, some were not. We did a slide show with construction shots. It was great."

"The first thing that impressed me when I got here was the people," said Lum. "The great experience they create for our guests — I'm very proud of it. You can have all the best rides and attractions in the world, but if you don't have the right people to execute that experience, it's going to fall short."

Villela agrees. With all the changes over the years, she finds the people have been a consistent factor in the park's success. "A lot of the trainers have been here for years and years and years. That hasn't changed," she said. "It's just a place where people enjoy their job."

The future is looking bright for the park. With new attractions on the horizon and a rebounding stock market health, guests can look forward to upcoming visits down the road.

"We have a plan for something new to come to our park every year. We keep adding to our great festivals and events. Plus, the city of San Antonio does a great job of bringing visitors to the city. It's a lot of planning and hard work. Opening attractions and having those events, it sets you up for success," Lum commented to *AT*.

"I've worked in year-round parks and seasonal parks," said Lum. "With seasonal parks you have to staff up for the summer. With a seasonal park, the leadership in the park is very important. Even a year-round park has to staff up for peak season, but good guest-centered decisions are key. That's one of the reasons our guests rate us so highly here."

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AT: Pam Sherborne
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Efteling, the fairy-tale theme park in the south of Holland, has announced that it will open a new attraction in its Fairytale Forest section next fall.

Based on the Brothers Grimm fairy tale "The Six Swans," the attraction, located between Snow White's cave and Cinderella's house, will be the 30th to join the forest. The fairy tale scene, featuring a walk-through castle monument, is the first ever in the park to be combined with a kiddie ride and will feature six swan-shaped boats suitable for young visitors to enjoy.

Fairytale Forest is one of Efteling's original areas, showcasing 10 fairy tales when the park debuted in 1952.

•

Officials of **Waldameer Park & Water World** in Millcreek Township, Pa., revealed plans for a new pendulum swing ride from **Zamperla**. The ride, called Chaos, is set to open at the start of the 2019 season and represents a $1.2 million investment between equipment and installation.

Chaos will have a seating capacity of 16, with riders facing outward on a circular gondola. The ride swings back and forth on its axis and eventually completes a full circle, making it the first ride at Waldameer to go upside down. The gondola rotates throughout the swinging cycle.

In Water World, a new, heated relaxation pool will be installed near the wave pool. The $500,000 project is capable of holding as many as 125 bathers, tripling the capacity of the existing relaxation pool.

•

In its fifth year since the **Koch** family of **Holiday World & Splashin' Safari** in Santa Claus, Ind., purchased **Alabama Splash Adventure,** located in Bessemer, the latter park's attendance soared 30 percent over that of 2017.

Dan, Koch, president of the park, which is located about 20 miles southwest of Birmingham, reported the increase even with eight days left in the season.

Upon buying the park, the family had to clean up both the property and its reputation. Fights in 2011 caused some families to steer clear. Up to the 2018 season, Koch had reported annual attendance increases of about 15 percent.

For the first time this year, Alabama Splash Adventure held a fall event on weekends in October.

•

Plans have been unveiled for the reopening of historic **Lakemont Park** in Altoona, Pa. The 125-year-old park closed at the beginning of the 2017 season for maintenance and was to reopen this past summer. The reopening now has been set for next Memorial Day weekend.

Calling the park "reinvented," its owners are moving away from theme park entertainment and instead focusing on outdoor recreation and special events. The free-admission park will offer two miniature golf courses, four new basketball courts, two sand volleyball courts, go-karts and green space for gatherings.

Rides that will remain include the vintage Leap-the-Dips and Skyliner roller coasters, as well as the Tin Lizzy antique car ride. The water play area will also stay.

•

The new 137,000-square-foot **Tennessee State Museum** in Nashville, Tenn., opened to the public Oct. 4.

The museum was expected to cost $160 million, with $120 million from the State of Tennessee and the rest from private donations. It contains thousands of artifacts from the state's history as well as traveling exhibits, interactive exhibits and a children's hands-on area.

Officials expect the museum to draw more than 220,000 visitors a year.

•

The new 35,000-square-foot **Pacific Seas Aquarium** at the **Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium,** located in Tacoma, Wash., opened to the public Sept. 7. Cost of the new aquarium project was $51.6 million, the largest capital improvement in the city-owned zoo's history.

The space, which was designed by **EHDD,** the architects behind California's **Monterey Bay Aquarium**, includes two large tank exhibits. Baja Bay, a 280,000-gallon warm-water exhibit, houses scalloped hammerhead sharks, green sea turtles, spotted eagle rays and fish. Northwest Waters, a 100,000-gallon exhibit, is now home to local marine species.

•

Bowling centers continue to be a growing industry segment.

A new location from **Bowlero Corp**. opened in Jupiter, Fla., last May; the company now has three locations in the state. In addition, the company plans to open a new location in a vacant, 53,000-square-foot building in downtown Tuscaloosa, Ala., in early 2019.

Bowlero centers feature signature black light bowling lanes, lane-side lounge seats and high-definition video walls. There are also large arcades and upscale food and beverage offerings.

District Eat and Play opened in **Oviedo Mall,** Orlando, Fla., last August. It features a restaurant, bar, more than 50 arcade games and 10 boutique bowling lanes, plus small ball bowling.

Ten Pin Fun Center is coming to the **Monte Vista Crossings Shopping Center** in Turlock, Calif., opening in December. It will feature 34 lanes, a two-story laser tag arena, an arcade, a virtual reality roller coaster, an outdoor beer garden, banquet rooms and a restaurant.

Owners of **Nashville Underground**, a bar and restaurant on Lower Broadway in downtown Nashville, Tenn., that opened in early 2018, are planning to add a double-decker bowling center to set them apart from the other bars in close proximity.

Madame Tussauds adds Justice League, offers heroic experience

AT: *Tim Baldwin*
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

ORLANDO, Fla. — **Merlin Entertainments** listens to what guests want. As a result, the company's **Madame Tussauds** attractions offer wax figures of top celebrities such as Justin Bieber. And months later, the Bieber figure will be shirtless.

The newest figures to arrive at the enduring wax museum brand's Orlando location, though fictional, are just as famous. And they are likely to stay in uniform.

Justice League: A Call for Heroes is an interactive experience featuring Superman, Batman and Wonder Woman. The characters star in their own three-dimensional scenes.

"We have kiosks at the end of all of our attractions globally, so people tell us what they want," said **James Paulding**, general manager, Madame Tussauds & **Sea Life Orlando**, noting that the superheroic **DC** film characters had long been requested. "People are very passionate about the Justice League and the characters within it. The reaction has been phenomenal."





Visitors at Madame Tussauds can join the Justice League by helping Superman raise a helicopter or striking Wonder Woman's famous pose.
AT/TIM BALDWIN; COURTESY MERLIN ENTERTAINMENTS (WONDER WOMAN)

During the experience, guests veer down darkened alleys and step into nighttime scenes to strike Wonder Woman's famous pose or work the Bat Signal. In one fun interaction, guests help Superman lift a crashing helicopter and it physically rises.

"Justice League pushes the boundaries of [immersion] further," said Paulding. "The scale of it and the interactions you have and to be a part of saving the world — it is really unique. Guests have embraced it and loved it and found it surprising and fun and different."

The facility did not sacrifice any existing figures or display area for the expansion. Joking that available space tends to accumulate things as a garage does, management said the space was always there when Madame Tussauds was built three years ago. It estimates the new section has added about 15 minutes to the average visit.

"We formed a great relationship with **Warner Bros.** and DC. They are suitably as excited as we are," said Paulding. "At first, I was a bit nervous as we had never worked with a partner before on this scale, but they have been terrific. It's been an awesome working relationship."

Starting from a rough layout sketch, designers, costumiers, a sculpt team, and the Warner Bros. and Merlin teams all collaborated on the experience.

"The costumes for the movies were made in London, and we have the same people to make them," said Paulding. "They were made from the molds that were taken out of storage. The details are very intricate. We wanted to make it absolutely realistic. It's that detail that makes this [exhibit] very different."

Since the launch of Madame Tussauds Orlando's Justice League experience, the attraction brand's Sydney, Australia, location has followed with one of its own.

• **madametussauds.com/Orlando**

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Busch Gardens, Wild Adventures reveal 2019 attractions

AT: *Dean Lamanna*
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Coming next year to Busch Gardens Williamsburg and Water Country USA, Finnegan's Flyer (right) and Cutback Water Coaster (above) will raise the thrill quotient at the companion parks. COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS WILLIAMSBURG

TAMPA, Fla. — Next year is shaping up to be another for bonanza for fans of thrill rides and family attractions. As if to dispel the post-Labor Day blahs quickly, several major theme parks in the southern and eastern U.S. revealed plans for large ride installations and themed areas.

Busch Gardens Tampa Bay led late summer's second big wave of park news with the announcement of Tigris, a triple-launch steel roller coaster set to open next spring. The 150-foot-tall, 60-plus-mph thriller — a Sky Rocket II model from **Premier Rides** — will send riders through several inversions and hang-time moments on a vertically oriented, 1,800-foot-long course after a propulsive forward/backward launch sequence.

"Tigris will be a strong addition to our family of world-class thrill rides," said **Stewart Clark**, park president and general manager. "With three intensely exciting launch points, this ride is unlike anything we have in our coaster collection. It's a testament to our continuing investment in the park and bringing innovative experiences to our guests."

Taking its name from that of the world's largest cat species, Panthera tigris, the new coaster is Florida's tallest. It is being constructed in the park's Stanleyville area, adjacent to Jungala, which houses endangered Bengal tigers.

The Tigris queue will include educational content about the plight of tigers in the wild and what conservationists are doing to help save them. In addition, the purchase of any merchandise in the Tigris gift shop will help make a difference, with five percent of the sales price donated to the **SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund** to protect tigers and their habitat.

Offering few details, Busch Gardens has teased that more big news is on the horizon — a second new thrill ride in 2020 for the area occupied by the long-closed Gwazi dueling wooden coaster. Online speculation and local reports have suggested that the structure could be in for hybridization and general reimagining by **Rocky Mountain Construction**.

Halfway up the Atlantic coast in Virginia, at **Busch Gardens Williamsburg** and its water park, **Water Country USA.**, two new rides will debut: Finnegan's Flyer, a Screamin' Swing ride from **S&S Worldwide**, and Cutback Water Coaster, which will be the only **ProSlide Technology** RocketBlast hybrid water coaster on the East Coast.

Located in the theme park's Ireland village, Finnegan's Flyer features two dueling, pendulum-like arms that fly progressively higher with each swing. Up to 32 riders at a time will experience both thrills and great views of the park as the swings reach a height of more than 80 feet and hit 45 mph on the downward swoop.

In the water park, Cutback Water Coaster will merge two unique technologies — a water jet propulsion system and four exhilarating, saucer-shaped structural features — to create an exciting ride along 856 feet of slide. Riders board a four-person raft and travel up and down steep hills, through tunnels and into the massive saucers at 35 feet per second. The banking in the saucers provides a drop-and-dive sensation as riders race along the edges.

"We're committed to providing new and unique experiences for our guests year after year, and these two new attractions are unlike any we've ever had at the parks," said **Kevin Lembke**, president of Busch Gardens Williamsburg and Water Country USA. "We know our guests love big thrills, and these two attractions will deliver just that."

New, and gentler, thrills will be on tap at **Wild Adventures Theme Park** in Valdosta, Ga. Renovations began in October on a three-acre area that will feature immersive wildlife experiences and six kid-friendly rides. It is scheduled to open next March.

The experience begins with Alligator Alley, a new exhibit housing dozens of alligators. Families will learn about the creatures during daily zookeeper talks and an all-new show called "Gators!" The area also will also offer guests the unique opportunity to feed an alligator.

The adventurous can get even closer to the reptiles with a stroll across Gator Crossing Rope Bridge, a netted bridge suspended directly over the alligator habitat. Ride highlights include the Okefenokee Express, a train ride for junior passengers; the Swampwater Snake, a family coaster; and Flying Gators, a platform ride with individually spinning, alligator-shaped vehicles.

Alligator Alley leads into Alapaha Trail, which allows guests to stroll through an actual Georgia swamp while encountering animal exhibits featuring native and exotic species.

"With this new area, Wild Adventures is providing an amazing place for families to experience together," said **Molly Deese**, park vice president and general manager. "It is really important to us that families have an experience that results in memories worth repeating."

Watch *Amusement Today*'s website for updates on these attractions and more.

•amusementtoday.com





Tigris, a triple-launch coaster with multiple inversions — including a heartline roll 150 feet in the air — will pounce on Busch Gardens Tampa Bay next spring.
COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS TAMPA BAY





Wild Adventures Theme Park will open a kid-friendly, three-acre area called Alligator Alley in March. It features six family rides and a rope bridge over an alligator habitat.
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Cyborgs, xenomorphs invade Southern Cali's VR landscape





Terminator Salvation: Fight for the Future **features cool facial-scanning technology and comfortable VR gear.** AT/DEAN LAMANNA; COURTESY SPACES

AT: *Dean Lamanna*
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

IRVINE, Calif. — Two four-decade-old Hollywood sci-fi / action film franchises have inspired new location-based, free-roaming, wireless virtual reality (VR) experiences.

Operating just 15 miles apart in Southern California shopping centers, *Terminator Salvation: Fight for the Future* and *Alien: Descent* — creations of Los Angeles-based **Spaces** and **Pure Imagination Studios** (in partnership with **FoxNext Destinations)**, respectively — are out to give the high-profile IP and technology of **The Void** and a few others a virtual run for their money.

Occupying a storefront at **Irvine Spectrum Center**, *Terminator Salvation* is a thrilling gameplay experience once the player has been suited-up, outfitted with an **Oculus** VR headset and armed with an electronic weapon. Before that, there isn't much in the way of "immersion": an informative video on a basic monitor explains the storyline, in which you'll very visibly become a character.

Set in a postapocalyptic Los Angeles, the fun ramps up quickly, with Terminators emerging from bombed-out buildings and scaling walls. Parties of up the four can participate. One surprise is that you'll recognize your fellow team members by their actual faces inside this cyborg-blasting hellscape.

That's because the Spaces team submits each player to a 3D facial-scanning camera prior to suit-up. And it really pays off post-session, when a video keepsake of the VR experience is made available that actually shows you and your companions — not just robotic avatars — in the heat of battle with Skynet.

What *Alien: Descent*, located at **The Outlets at Orange**, lacks in that replay-inducing technology, it makes up for with unsettling pre-game atmospherics worthy of the film series. The attendants are costumed and script-rehearsed in a lobby area resembling a Weyland-Yutani space mining outpost. The video introduction and suit-up are handled with equally impressive story-based authenticity.

After players are armed and transported by simulated elevator to the "mining area," all bets are off as swarms of aliens spring from every crevice and direction. The action is nonstop, fairly scary and a true calorie-burner, in the best sense.

These attractions suggest even bigger things to come from their creators. Visit them online for more information.

- **aliendescent.com**
- **spaces.com**



Action-seekers at the *Alien: Descent* VR experience get a toothy greeting upon entering. AT/DEAN LAMANNA



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Sun hides, but crowds still come out for Minnesota State Fair

Rainy weather fails to deny event new attendance records

AT: *B. Derek Shaw*
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ST. PAUL, Minn. — Despite less than stellar weather on many of its 12 days, the **Minnesota State Fair** enjoyed an extremely busy gate.

A total of 2,046,533 people visited the Aug. 23-Sept. 3 (Labor Day) event, surpassing last years' attendance of 1,997,320. It was the best overall attendance ever for the fair, dubbed "The Great Minnesota Get-Together." Five individual days also saw record attendance.







The Minnesota State Fair offered 60 rides between its Mighty Midway and Kidway areas. Sky Flyer, a Zamperla tower swing, was brought in by Reithoffer Shows and was one of the event's top-grossing rides, while the fairgrounds' 1915-built Ye Old Mill dark boat ride underwent upgrades that improved capacity. COURTESY MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

"We had quite a few days with rain — even some with severe weather," said **Danielle Dullinger**, fair spokesperson. "We created messaging around the fact that the fair is still fun in the rain, and we saw that reflected in our attendance numbers. Our fair guests came out in droves with their umbrellas and ponchos!"

Twenty-four operators brought in a total of 60 rides, evenly split between the fair's Mighty Midway and Kidway areas.

Operators included **Alamo Amusements** (6 rides), **Arnold Amusements** (3), **B Double E Independent Amusements** (1), **B-Thrilled Attractions** (2), **Del Rio Cristiani** (2), **D&K Amusements** (2), **Fair Ride Entertainment** (4), **Family Entertainment** (2), **Fun Attractions** (2), **Gopher State Expositions** (4), **International Attractions** (3), **Joyrides** (2), **Laser Fair** (3), **Lauther Amusements** (2), **M&C Attractions** (1), **Mr. Ed's Magical Midways** (2), **Prime Pacific Entertainment** (3), **Reithoffer Shows** (1), **Rose's Rides** (2), **S.J. Entertainment** (2), **Skerbeck Entertainment Group** (3), **Tinsley Amusements** (3), **Wood Entertainment Co.** (3) and **Michael F. Wood** (2).

Skerbeck and B Double E were new to the fair this year.

Rides making their first appearance at the event included Super Frisbee (**Huss**, B Double E); Haunted Castle Dark Ride (**Gosetto**, Fair Ride Entertainment); Down Draft (**Battech Enterprises**, Family Entertainment); Rock Star (**A.R.M. Rides**, Gopher State); and Teacups (**Kolmax Plus**), Combination Carousel (**Luna Park**) and Twin Flip (**Moser Rides**), all via Skerbeck.

The three highest-grossing rides were the Crazy Mouse spinning coaster (**Reverchon**, S.J. Entertainment), Starship 3000 (**Wisdom Rides**, Laser Fair) and Sky Flyer (**Zamperla**, Reithoffer Shows). Total Midway / Kidway ride gross was $3,991,022, up 4.4 percent from last year.

Off-midway attractions in the fair's Adventure Park included Skyscraper (**Skyscraper Two, Ltd.**), Slingshot (**Hot Shot Thrill Rides, Inc.**), Rock-Climbing Wall (**Fun Adventures, Inc.**), Turbo Bungee (**Big Adventures, Inc.**) and Krazy Maze (**Krazy Maze, LLC**).

Ye Old Mill, a dark boat ride first opened by **John Keenan** in 1915, is the fair's oldest attraction and had been operating as a concession. This year, the fair purchased the popular ride from the Keenan family for $80,000 and, working with **SkyTrans Mfg., LLC**, made numerous improvements to it. These included a new paddle wheel, a continuous conveyor system, a concrete deck and electrical upgrades in the building, plus 15 new fiberglass-surfaced boats to replace the old wooden ones.

Expecting a 35 percent increase in rider throughput, SkyTrans was surprised when the numbers came in. "One day of the fair, we had a 62-percent-higher day," said **Rich Combs**, general manager of SkyTrans. "The changes made significant increases in capacity."

The fair's grandstand was home to four sell-out shows this year: **Sugarland**, with special guests **Frankie Ballard** and **Lindsay Ell**; **The Current's Music on-a-Stick** featuring **Trampled by Turtles**, with special guests **Lord Huron** and **Lissie**; **The Beach Boys**, with special guests **John Stamos** and **The Righteous Brothers**; and **Old Dominion**, with special guests **Neal McCoy** and **Morgan Evans**.

New for this year's fair was the Hangar, an area featuring food, craft beer and entertainment. Twenty-seven new food items tempted fairgoers, including bananas foster French toast, blueberry rhubarb cobbler, firecracker shrimp-stuffed avocado, Moroccan sausage bowl, pepperoni chips with roasted red pepper queso, triple chocolate strawberry shortcake and zesty PB&J sausage.

Challenges faced by the fair this year were typical of a large-scale event — primarily vehicular and park-and-ride bus congestion and the weather. The fair had an emergency management plan in place.

"Everything was running smoothly by our second day," Dullinger said. "And with hardy Minnesota State Fair fans, the fair went on as normal."

The 2019 edition runs Aug. 22-Sept. 2 (Labor Day).

• mnstatefair.org



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From Alaska to the Midwest, fairs bid summer a fun farewell

AT: *B. Derek Shaw*
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

NORTH AMERICA — Weather impacts were felt to varying degrees at some major outdoor events as fair season continued across the U.S. in Canada. Following is a recap of three fairs in Alaska and the Midwest.





The 12-day Alaska State Fair, with 38 rides provided by Golden Wheel Amusements, was staged in a bucolic location at the base of the Chugach Mountains. COURTESY CLARK JAMES MISHLER, ALASKA STATE FAIR

Alaska State Fair
Palmer, Alaska
Aug. 23-Sept. 3

Famous for its record-setting giant vegetables and picturesque location at the foot of the Chugach Mountains in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley, the **Alaska State Fair** enjoyed eight days of great weather during its 12-day run.

While an overall attendance figure was not available by the time *Amusement Today* went to press, officials were certain it exceeded last year's 280,000.

"The rainy weather we experienced the first weekend made it difficult to reach a double-digit increase in attendance this year," said **Jerome Hertel**, fair general manager. "However, we are happy with an increase of just over four percent and even happier that we saw increases in almost all areas, including revenues."

Golden Wheel Amusements, the state's only carnival operator, was the midway provider. It had a total of 38 rides (15 of the kiddie variety) onsite. Rides new to the fair this year included a **Zamperla** Rockin' Tug and a rebuilt **Wisdom** Gravitron called G-Force.

The three top-grossing rides included G-Force, Apollo (**A.R.M.**, British-manufactured Skymaster) and Alibaba / 1001 Nachts (A.R.M., also British-manufactured).

"The midway was packed beyond belief," said **Chase Eckert**, operations manager for Golden Wheel Amusements. "We had more patrons than we ever had. The weather held out." (The company did not share midway ride revenue information.)

The fair added more asphalt paving as part of a midway expansion program. And both before and after opening, it launched some promotions for the carnival.

There were two days of P.O.P. offered during the week to take pressure off the weekends. Attendees could get a one-day fair admission and unlimited rides on a chosen day for just $50 with advance online purchase; the admission price was an additional $10 if purchased on the midway. Another promotion included two "Buddy Days," which allowed ticket-holding patrons to bring a friend on a ride for free.

New food vendors included **Bear Naked BBQ**, **Yukon John's Pork Rinds** and **The Lucky Wishbone** (fried chicken). Among the entertainment offerings were three sold-out monster truck shows and a demolition derby. The **Goo Goo Dolls**, **Johnny Lang** and **Three Dog Night** led the performance lineup.

"From rides and concerts to exhibits and great food, there was something for everyone to remember the good time they had at the fair," Hertel said. "Thank you to all the people who attended this year and to those who helped make the fair a success."

Next year's event runs Aug. 22-Sept. 2.

• alaskastatefair.org

Nebraska State Fair
Grand Island, Neb.
Aug. 24-Sept. 3

Six inches of accumulated rain affected setup of the 11-day **Nebraska State Fair**, forcing outdoor concerts to be moved indoors and cancellation of some events. In addition, a raised heat index created safety issues. The weather impacted attendance, which was down 17 percent from last year to 314,805.

Wade Shows brought in a total of 41 rides, highlighted by the introduction of adult Bumper Boats featuring **Foster** boats with **Yamaha** motors. "There are only one or two of these rides traveling," said **Frank Zaitshik**, company owner.

Other popular rides on the midway included a Spider, (**Eyerly** / **Battach**), Super Cyclone roller coaster (**Pinfari**) and Giant Wheel (**Chance Rides**).

Even with the adverse weather conditions, ride revenue totaled a healthy $820,255. And the general visitor mood reflected the event's theme: "Let Your Fair Flag Fly."

"The midway was excellent,"

See FAIRS, page 45





The Nebraska State Fair did well despite six inches of rain that fell during the course of the 11-day event. Wade Shows supplied 41 rides. COURTESY NEBRASKA STATE FAIR



FAIRS
Continued from page 44

said Zaitshik, praising the fair's new general manager, **Lori Cox**, who was hired last winter to succeed **Joseph McDermitt**, who retired. "Lori did a great job. It was a baptism by fire."

"One of the first things I was charged with was to take a good look at team structure and [staffing] issues," said Cox, noting that changes have included the hiring of a chief of finance to handle duties that used to be farmed out. "The team was fairly silo-ed when I came on, and I wanted to make them more interdependent."

Reflecting Cox's 27 years in marketing — she previously held positions with the **Montana State Fair**, **West Idaho Fair** and **Big Sky Country Fair**, among others — the state fair's promotional push has evolved rapidly, with brand-building undertaken at county fairs and other venues and events throughout the year.

Special promotions included a Date Night Bundle, comprising two gate admissions and two carnival wristbands, and a Weekday Getaway deal, offering one gate admission and one carnival wristband. Wristbands also were offered online, pre-fair, at a significant discount. Gate admissions were sold through all 52 **Pump & Pantry** convenience stores.

The Nebraska State Fair focuses on interactive, agriculture and educational experiences while promoting families, fun and state pride. The 2019 edition is scheduled for Aug. 23-Sept. 2.

•statefair.org

Kansas State Fair
Hutchinson, Kan.
Sept. 7-16

Attendance grew at this year's **Kansas State Fair**. The visitor total was 327,965 — up 1.76 percent over 2017.

"Good weather, good concerts and new activities bumped up our attendance this year," said **Amy Bickel**, director of marketing. Initial reports also showed revenue growth, with several vendors indicating that their sales topped totals from previous years.

In addition, an increase in the state sale tax that took effect July 1 (Senate Bill 415) allowed 84 percent of the state sales tax revenues collected during the fair to be moved from the State General Fund to the State Fair Capital Improvements Fund. "The increase in revenue will help us get a jump-start on capital improvements, which will make the fair even better going forward," said **Bob Moeder**, interim general manager.





North American Midway Entertainment (NAME) stocked the Kansas State Fair with 40 rides. BulletTrain, a Interpark coaster, was new to the event this year.
COURTESY JASON PROBST/BOWERCOMM, NAME

North American Midway Entertainment (NAME) brought in 40 rides, 18 of which were kiddie machines. An Interpark coaster called BulletTrain was new to the fair this year. Top grossers were Freak Out (**KMG**), Arctic Express (Chance), Starship (Wisdom) and Pharaoh's Fury (Chance). While NAME never discloses midway revenue, **Amy Girton**, vice president of marketing, said it was up.

The fair offered **4-H**, **FFA** and military promotions and implemented daily themes reflecting aspects of Kansas. It also gave every student in Reno County, Kansas, one free gate admission.

In the competition department, **Calvin Beeson** of Clyde broke the Kansas State Fair record with a whopping 198-pound watermelon.



The fair featured the usual lineup of crazy fried foods, including this year's additions — deep-fried deviled eggs and a moon pie burger with marshmallows. Food vendor **Susie Bernard** served up pickle slushes with candy, and **Hall Family Foods** offered a deep-fried piña colada made from rum-soaked pineapple rings coated with coconut breading.

Fairgoers purchased nearly 24,000 concert tickets for eight concerts this year, up from 15,000 last year. Top-selling acts were **The Beach Boys** and **Dan + Shay**.

Moeder said the event has reached "a pivotal turning point," with this year's numbers reflecting a change in direction. "We have a really solid team who stayed focused, helping us grow and expand the fair during this transitional year," he said.

The changes, he added, are "the building blocks that will help make next year's Kansas State Fair even stronger and grow the fair in the future."

The fair is the largest single annual event in the state. It will run Sept. 6-15 in 2019.

•kansasstatefair.com



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MIDWAYSCENE

AT: B. Derek Shaw
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Rita Moore, CEO of the **Yolo County Fair**, in Woodland, Calif., retired in October after 31 years with the fair. Moore's fair career began at age nine, when she sold hamburgers at the event. Years later she began working part-time in the fairs and expositions branch, then setting up buildings — holding positions in accounting and as deputy CEO before being named to the top spot in 2008.

Bart Vannucci has been named the fair's new CEO. Vannucci, a local businessman who was the local 4-H community's volunteer livestock chair, was appointed to the fair board in 2012. He was set to spend 90 days deepening his understanding of the resources the fair association has in its staff and board members, and to work toward developing a long-term business plan.

The Yolo County Fair ran Aug. 15-19, with **Brass Ring Amusements** / **Midway of Fun** providing the carnival. The fair is known for having the longest-running free gate fair in Northern California.

•

James H. Drew Exposition recently restored and added an LED lighting package to its one-of-a-kind, 1958-built **Velare Brothers** Space Wheels. The dual double Ferris wheels, similar to the Sky Wheels manufactured by **the Allan Herschell Company** and **Chance Rides**, were originally erected at now-defunct **Pacific Ocean Park** in Santa Monica, Calif. Mounted on four trailers, the 32-passenger wheels recently appeared at the **North Georgia State Fair** in Marietta.

The spectacular attraction was owned by **Royal American Shows**, **Cumberland Valley Shows** and **Gold Medal Shows** before Drew Expositions picked it up in 2012.

•

The **World of Wonders Entertainment Experience** has been sold to **Tommy Breen**. Breen is maintaining the tradition started in 1951 by showman **Ward Hall**, who died in August at age 88. When it was established, there were 150 shows of its type at fairs and carnivals around the country. It is the last touring fairgrounds show in America.

World of Wonders now includes an updated version of the historic 10-in-1 fairgrounds show, as well as the Escape Explosion thrill show. Acts feature comedy, magic, Wild West, variety and vaudeville, with performers including contortionists, a strongwoman, illusionists, fire eaters, snake charmers, trick ropers and more.

Among this year's locations were **Fun Fest**, Long Island, N.Y.; **Saratoga County Fair**, Ballston Spa, N.Y.; **Cumberland County Fair**, Fayetteville, N.C.; **National Cattle Congress**, Waterloo, Iowa; and **Northwest Florida Fair**, Ft. Walton Beach.

Breen, who joined the show in 2005, taught himself to swallow swords while in high school and earned a film degree from **Rutgers University** in New Jersey.

•

As noted previously in this column, the goal of visiting all of the county fairs in one's home state can be a thing.

Lexa Kessler, a 24-year-old from Mount Blanchard, Ohio, spent four years visiting the 88 county fairs in her state, plus the **Ohio State Fair** in Columbus. She completed the quest in September with a visit to the Buckeye State's oldest continuous county fair, **Geauga County Fair** in Burton. "I didn't think I'd ever get it done," Kessler said. "I thought years from now I'd be like, 'Oh, I should have finished that,' so I'm glad I did."

It took **John Lyons** of Dover, Ohio, only two years to capture all of the state's county fairs. After retiring from **Timken Co.** in 2015, Lyons knew he had to find something to keep himself busy. Last summer, he had made it to half of the fairs; this year, he visited the remaining 44. "I judge a fair by its local flavor and agricultural interest," Lyons said. "I want to eat the food of local vendors... the bear claws and hand-cranked ice cream. My absolute favorite is the pork sandwiches at the **Tuscarawas County Fair** in Dover."

Lyons found a number of fairs across the state that offered unique programs and attractions, such as the **Mahoning County Fair** in Canfield, which featured 150 antique tractors. "No one knows how much work goes into just a week, and how much support is being shown in showcasing the community," he said in praise of fair volunteers.

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WATER PARKS & RECREATION

▸ News Splash — page 50

Omaha's Fun-Plex Waterpark & Rides rolls out Rockin' Rapids

New attraction from Splashtacular landed at park last summer

AT: *Jeffrey Seifert*
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

OMAHA, Neb. — This past summer, **Fun-Plex Waterpark & Rides** opened a new attraction, Rockin' Rapids Water Slide. It is the largest addition to the park since its debut in 1979.

Splashtacular of Paola, Kansas, supplied the five-story attraction, which features two enclosed, 1,200-foot tube slides with individual characteristics.

The first of the two slides sports alternating color bands of red and yellow. It has both tunneled and open sections, with sheets of water drenching riders as they transition from the closed to open segments. As riders traverse the enclosed portions, they pass under bands of colored light provided by translucent stripes embedded in the top of the slide — adding some visual thrills.

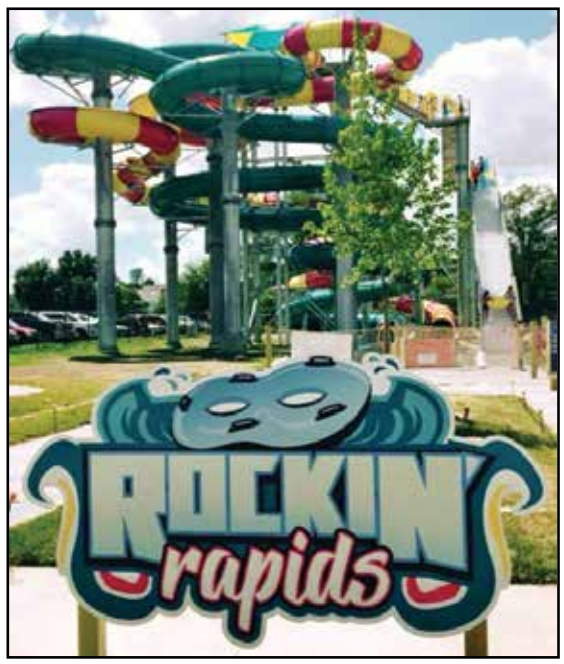
The second slide's walls alternate between dark and translucent sections, allowing some sunlight to pass through. Riders begin with a long dark section, but after a few twists and turns in near-pitch-black conditions, the slide enters sections illuminated by the sun. Darkness and light continue to alternate as the rafts twist, turn and climb the sides of the curving tube.

Both slides, which share a tower, accommodate single-rider and two-person rafts.

These are the first tube slides for the park, although single-person tubes are also used in the Motion Ocean wave pool and Lazzzy River. Rockin' Rapids joins the park's five-story Typhoon Falls as another option for guests seeking high-speed thrills.

The water park also has a kiddie pool play area and a water play structure for older children. Rockin' Rapids was added to celebrate the park's 40th season.





Adding two colorful, exciting tube slides to Fun-Plex Waterpark & Rides, Rockin' Rapids is the property's largest expansion since its debut in 1979. COURTESY FUN-PLEX

For adults, there is a separate area called Breakers Bay Bar. It features an 1,800-square-foot pool complete with pool perimeter seating and island bar tops, as well as Nebraska's only swim-up bar.

Founded in 1979 as **The Kart Track**, with just one go-kart track, Fun-Plex has grown over the years to include the water park and a dry park with multiple rides, including a carousel, a Tilt-A-Whirl and several kiddie rides.

•fun-plex.com

Colorado's Purgatory Resort opens mountain coaster from ADG

DURANGO, Colo. — In late August, **Purgatory Resort** unveiled what it bills as the only mountain coaster in southwestern Colorado.

The Purgatory Inferno Mountain Coaster, a product of Cohoes, N.Y.-based **Aquatic Development Group, Inc.** (ADG), is 4,000 feet long with an overall vertical descent of 300 feet. It features nine switchbacks and one 360-degree horizontal loop, and at the time of its opening, it was expected to operate in all seasons.

The ride's individual carts can achieve speeds of up to 25 mph. Sections of the track are elevated as high as 40 feet.

"The new Inferno Mountain Coaster is an absolute blast to ride," said **Elizabeth Howe**, general manager of Purgatory Resort. "This thrilling new ride zips you through aspen trees with twists and turns, revealing incredible views of the San Juan Mountains."

The new mountain coaster employs a motorized pulley on a lift hill. Once the cart crests, gravity whisks it along a course that undulates through the mountain scenery. Riders regulate their own speed with a hand brake.

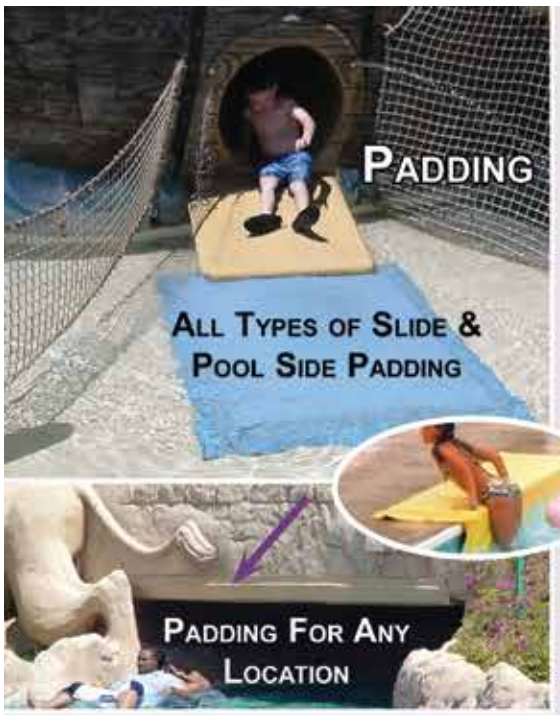
The attraction is "a fantastic new addition to all the other activities at Purgatory Resort, providing one more reason to visit the resort any time of year," Howe said. "The new coaster is a fun ride for all ages, and it gives you the freedom to determine how fast — or slow — you want to go."

This is the second such attraction designed and built by ADG to open in Colorado. For more information on ADG Mountain Coasters, visit adgmountainsides.com.

—Dean Lamanna



Riders on the 4,000-foot-long Purgatory Inferno Mountain Coaster can reach speeds of up to 25 mph while taking in the stunning alpine scenery.
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NEWSSPLASH

AT: Jeffrey L. Seifert
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The city of Augusta, Ga., is hoping to construct a whitewater park on the site of the 1937-built **New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam**, which the **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** is planning to remove. The shipping lock closed in 1979 and the dam does not provide any hydroelectric or flood control function. Removal of the dam would provide the water flow necessary to create a rapids park with the potential to draw a significant number of tourists.

Two proposals have been presented, with one calling for a 2,000-foot channel of rapids and lazy river sections through the existing river. A second proposal calls for diverting some of the water to a separate channel from the main river for the rapids section. Either proposal would result in a substantial man-made whitewater rapids park. Only a dozen parks in the U.S. would rival the size of the rapids park Augusta is proposing.

•

The Sutherland Shire, a local government area in the southern region of Sydney, Australia, has opened a new water fun park at the **Sutherland Leisure Centre**. The park includes slides, water fountains and play equipment for children of all ages and abilities. Parents and other visitors not wanting to get wet can enjoy shade structures and seating areas surrounding the park.

"This will be the hottest new attraction for families across Sutherland Shire, providing a safe and exciting new place to spend weekends, school holidays or even for hosting birthday parties," said Mayor **Carmela Pesce**.

The water fun park is open from September to April, with exceptions to be made for warm and sunny days outside of that period. Access is included in the leisure center's standard entry fee, which also allows unlimited access to the indoor and outdoor pools.

•

The 51-year-old **Buchner Pool** in Waukesha, Wis., may be in line for a much-needed makeover. In September, the common council adopted a five-year, $318.9 million community improvement program that includes more than $8.6 million to reimagine the pool facility. The plan calls for turning the existing pool into more of a water park with waterslides, a lazy river, a plunge pool and a reconfiguration of the existing pool, as well as a diving area and a pool deck.

The current pool is no longer code compliant, and most of the pool's equipment, including the pumps and filtration systems, require replacement. The pool work is scheduled to take place in phases through 2020.



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BUSINESS & NEWSMAKERS

▸ ***Women of Influence:*** **Jane Cooper, President and COO, Herschend Family Entertainment — page 55**

Disneyland kills hotel plans



ANAHEIM, Calif. — Following a skirmish with the City of Anaheim over tax incentives, the Disneyland Resort has canceled plans for a fourth hotel (see rendering) that was projected to open in 2021. The 700-room lodge was to be located at the west end of Downtown Disney District, which now will remain focused on enhancing its retailtainment and dining experiences. "We've taken the time to review the economics of our proposed four-diamond hotel for Anaheim and have made the final decision to cancel the project," resort spokesperson Lisa Haines said in a statement. "The conditions and agreements that stimulated this investment in Anaheim no longer exist, and we must therefore adjust our long-term investment strategy." Several tenants, including ESPN Zone and Rainforest Cafe, had been forced to close in order to make way for construction. One of the affected businesses, Earl of Sandwich, has reopened. COURTESY DISNEYLAND RESORT

S&S' Carolyn Weaver retires



Carolyn Weaver

NORTH LOGAN, Utah — **S&S Worldwide, Inc.**, recently announced the retirement of **Carolyn Weaver**, longtime manager of **Arrow Dynamics**. "We recognize [Weaver's] continued dedication and years of service and ask that you join us in extending our best wishes to her in her retirement," the company said in a statement. "She will be greatly missed." Customer service inquiries should be directed to Jaime Maw at jmaw@s-s.com or (435) 752-1987. S&S is a leading manufacturer of vertical and family thrill rides. The company acquired Arrow Dynamics, an innovator the design of tubular steel roller coasters, in 2002.

Roller poised to accelerate growth

Software firm raises $7M to expand reach of products worldwide

AT: *Dean Lamanna*
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com





Team Roller is on a software technology roll at its main headquarters in Melbourne, Australia. The company also has offices in London and Los Angeles. Brothers Luke and Mark Finn (right) founded Roller in Melbourne in 2011. COURTESY ROLLER

MELBOURNE, Australia — **Roller**, an all-in-one software platform for leisure and entertainment venues, recently announced that it has raised a $7 million Series B round of funding.

The round was led by U.S.-based growth capital firm **Acadian Software**, with participation

from a number of Australia-based investors.

Roller is an enterprise platform that allows leisure and entertainment venues to perform business-critical functions such as online bookings and in-venue payments, and manage day-to-day operations and customer relationships. Among its products is the Self Serve Kiosk, which reduces queues by allowing customers to purchase tickets, sign waivers, check in and pay — all with convenience.

Founded in Melbourne in 2011 by brothers **Luke and Mark Finn**, the solution is being

used by hundreds of clients around the world to deliver best-in-class customer experiences

and maximize operating efficiency. Roller will use the new funding to expand its product

development team and accelerate growth in North America and Europe.

"We have invested heavily in building flexible and scalable technology, which allows us to

serve several industry verticals, including theme parks, trampoline parks, museums, zoos,

bowling alleys, water parks and more," said Luke Finn, CEO. "As a cloud-based solution that is approaching a billion dollars of total transaction value, Roller has reached a scale where we are able see industry-wide trends, best practices and technology needs. This places us in a unique position to help our clients drive value through a combination of data-driven insights, improved customer engagement

capabilities and targeted operating recommendations."

With a team of 50, and offices in Melbourne, London and Los Angeles, Roller already is globally focused. It currently supports clients in 15 countries and has translated the platform into 12 languages.

The funding round brings the total amount raised by Roller since its founding to $15 million.

As part of the latest transaction, **Jon Karlen**, a founding partner at Acadian, will join Roller's board, which is chaired by **Dennis Finn**, CEO of **Advisian**, a global consulting firm.

"Roller has created a market-leading product that is hyper-focused on the unique needs

of leisure and entertainment venue operators," Karlen said. "It facilitates superior end-customer

experiences and delivers tangible bottom-line results for clients. Luke and Mark have already built a successful company… and are very well placed to lead it through this next growth phase."

According to the **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions**, global theme and amusement park attendance is expected to reach 1.3 billion by 2020 — and be worth US$58 billion in total spending. The market has been growing faster than nominal GDP growth since 2012, and Roller expects this to continue as consumer appetite for leisure and entertainment experiences increases.

"Roller will continue to invest heavily in technology and innovation in order to help our clients grow," said Luke Finn. "This has been key to our success to date, and we want to both maintain and build upon our reputation as a pioneer within the industry."

• **roller.software**

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Family ride throws visitors for a loop at Tekzone Middle East

Customized attraction from Sunkid mixes tradition, technology

AT: *Dean Lamanna*
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

KUWAIT CITY, Kuwait — The recently opened amusement center **Tekzone Middle East**, part of Kuwait's largest shopping complex, showcases virtual reality / augmented reality experiences, escape rooms and other cutting-edge diversions among its 60 games and attractions.

But whirling in the midst of the 4,000-square-meter space is a ride that combines traditionally thrilling motion with newer technology to create a different, family-friendly kind of fun.

Called Time Loop, the ride is a customized version of the Loopster, a product of Austria-based **Sunkid, GmbH**. The interactive ride incorporates special software that records the rider-controlled vertical spinning motion of the vehicles as part of a scoring system used in all of Tekzone's attractions.

Individual post-ride scores are shown on a screen adjacent to the attraction at the end of the cycle. The day's top scorers on all of the park's attractions are displayed on more generally visible screens around the facility.

The scoring system depends on RFID (radio frequency identification) chip technology in a bracelet worn by the rider. It records the rider's name and other data during the attraction experiences.

In keeping with Tekzone's alternately dark and flashy, outer space-like environment, Time Loop itself is illuminated with LED lighting that produces endless combinations of operator-controlled colors and patterns.

Sunkid also recently installed an unusual, playground-equipment-on-steroids-type ride, the Sundancer, at **Wild & Adventure Park** in Ferleiten, Austria, where it has installed a number of other customized rides.

The Sundancer features a single two-seat, saucer-shaped vehicle at the end of an arm that rotates on a hub. The speed and rotation of the vehicle are controlled by the rider(s).

With installations in more than 3,500 facilities around the world, Sunkid also is a market leader in equipment and guest conveyor belts for attractions including water park slides and indoor ski / adventure slopes.

The company's extensive sales network makes all products and associated support services available globally. Family rides and components are produced in Bassenheim, Germany, while conveyor equipment is built in Bad Goisern, Austria.

•**sunkidworld.com**



Located at Austria's Wild & Adventure Park, the Sundancer adds some surprising spins to the traditional rotating playground ride. COURTESY SUNKID



Time Loop at Tekzone Middle East offers a spinning, carnival-style ride experience with an added scoring feature and a variable LED light display. COURTESY SUNKID



Hyatt hotel slated for Canada's Wonderland in 2020

Dual-branded lodging to offer guest rooms, apartment-style suites

VAUGHAN, Ontario, Canada — **Cedar Fair Entertainment Co.** has signed a pair of hotel services agreements with a **Hyatt Hotels Corp.** affiliate for a dual-branded Hyatt Place and Hyatt House at **Canada's Wonderland** theme park near Toronto.

The hotel will offer 203 rooms — a combination of spacious guest rooms and apartment-style suites — in a high-tech contemporary environment. Construction is expected to begin in the first half of 2019, with an opening date planned for late 2020.

"The new dual-branded Hyatt Place and Hyatt House hotel will continue Cedar Fair's significant investment in Canada's Wonderland, one of the portfolio's largest and most successful parks," said **Richard Zimmerman**, president and CEO of Cedar Fair. "We expect strong attendance growth there, driven by the introduction of a new record-breaking roller coaster, Yukon Striker, and an immersive holiday event, WinterFest, in 2019.

"This development will mark the next evolution in the park's diverse offerings, providing park guests, business travelers and tourists with convenient accommodations in a growing area."



A 203-room, dual-branded Hyatt hotel offering first-class accommodations is tentatively set to open at Canada's Wonderland in 2020. COURTESY CEDAR FAIR ENTERTAINMENT

The eight-story hotel will be located on a 16-acre parcel of the park's land adjacent to Ontario Highway 400. Amenities will include free Wi-Fi throughout the hotel, an indoor pool, a 24-hour fitness center, a coffee and cocktails bar, casual dining options, a business center, flexible meeting / event spaces and a sundeck.

The property "will be a great example of our continued focus on growing premium hotels that attract business and leisure travelers alike," said **Scott Richer**, Hyatt's regional vice president of development for Canada. "We're thrilled to team up with the team at Cedar Fair — we're confident the appeal and convenience of these two brands will meet the needs of guests visiting Canada's Wonderland and the growing city of Vaughan."

The project marks the sixth hotel in Cedar Fair's accommodations portfolio. The company currently owns and operates three hotels at **Cedar Point** in Sandusky, Ohio, and one at **Knott's Berry Farm** in Buena Park, Calif. An additional hotel is under construction at **Carowinds** in Charlotte, N.C.

—Dean Lamanna

Roush expands, opening new facility in Orlando

ORLANDO, Fla. — **Roush**, a leading global product development services supplier, is opening a facility in Orlando to expand its entertainment systems division's ongoing support of the attractions industry. It was expected to be fully operational this month.

Since 2007, the award-winning company has engineered, designed and manufactured ride seat systems, equipment and show action figures for theme parks from its main campus in Livonia, Mich. According to a report in *Orlando Sentinel*, **SeaWorld**, **Universal Studios** and **The Walt Disney Co.** have been among its clients.

With its presence in Orlando, Roush will provide an expanded level of support for the long-term engineering and operational requirements of the ride vehicles and service parts it has developed and manufactured.



Jim Yagely



Dean Massab

"The Orlando facility will enable us to be on site, responding to our customers' requests as soon as they arise," said **Jim Yagley**, president of engineering services for Roush. "Being in the capital of the themed entertainment industry will allow us to really focus on engineering and technical support from a locally based engineering team on hand for day-to-day work in the parks."

"For more than 40 years, we've pushed the bar higher and higher for engineering ingenuity and excellence," added **Dean Massab**, chief commercial officer for Roush. "Opening a new Orlando facility supports our long-term growth and diversification strategies."

Initial service offerings based at the 12,000-square-foot Orlando location will include engineering, design, development, mockups and prototyping. On-site final assembly and light fabrication capabilities will be added in the future.

•roush.com

Flying theater headed to Dreamworld in December



Dreamworld theme park CEO Craig Davidson and Brogent Group CEO C.H. Ouyang aired Dreamworld's plans for a Brogent i-Ride flying theater in June at Asian Attractions Expo 2018 in Hong Kong. COURTESY BROGENT GROUP

COOMERA, Queensland, Australia — An attraction billed as the first flying theater in the southern hemisphere is expected to open at Dreamworld theme park in late December.

The i-Ride flying theater, from Taiwan-based **Brogent Group**, will make use of the old **IMAX** cinema building originally opened at Dreamworld in 1981 and situated close to the park's main entrance.

"It's the perfect start of a day at the park to see beautiful Australia from a very different and new angle!" said **Craig Davidson**, park CEO, of the new attraction.

C.H. Ouyang, CEO of Brogent, said both companies have developed a close partnership. Brogent will not only supply the ride but also help with film production. The team started filming the varied landscapes around Australia in 2017.

Brogent and **Ardent Leisure**, the parent company of Dreamworld, also have announced a partnership for standalone flying theater development in Australia and New Zealand.

•dreamworld.com.au

Women INFLUENCE

Jane Cooper

President and COO
Herschend Family Entertainment
Atlanta, Ga.



A view from the top...

Jane Cooper is the president and COO of Herschend Family Entertainment, a privately owned company that operates several theme parks and amusement attractions in the U.S., including Dollywood in Pigeon Forge, Tenn.; Silver Dollar City in Branson, Mo.; and Wild Adventures Theme Park in Valdosta, Ga.

The company was founded in Branson in 1950 by Jack and Pete Herschend. Currently headquartered in Peachtree Corners, Ga., in metro Atlanta, it has seen much growth and garnered many accolades.

Accomplishments and affiliations...

- **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Foundation Chairman**
- **Dolly's Foundation**
- **Chairperson, IAAPA board of directors, 2005**
- **Blooloop 50 Top Influencer List 2018**

Finding comfort and success in change

ATLANTA, Ga. — Jane Cooper's first amusement industry job was in merchandising at Kings Island theme park in Mason, Ohio. She was a junior at a local high school, and her motivation to get that job wasn't to have a career in the amusement industry. At that time, she wasn't even aware that was a possibility.

Her desire was to attend college and become an accountant. As the oldest child of five, all girls, she knew money would be an issue.

But her job at Kings Island held some surprises.

"I liked it at the very beginning," Cooper recalled. "On my first day, a gal from the neighborhood was there and she was my supervisor. I knew her. She was a year older than me. That motivated me, too. I thought, 'Maybe I could do that.'"

She did, becoming a supervisor the next year.

More than 40 years later, Cooper is still working in the amusement industry. And her enthusiasm for the business is very much apparent.

Cooper did make it to college after working at the park for two seasons, attending the University of Cincinnati. As she neared graduation, she began the arduous task of looking for employment in accounting.

"Then, I got a call from Kings Island," she said. "They were hiring and apparently looking back over some old employment files. They found my name, saw I had a background in merchandising there and they called me. They asked if I would like to come for the season to help them out."

And she did.

"I found the managers who called me very interesting," Cooper said. "They had been in the industry, both in merchandising. They really included me and respected me."

When the seasonal employment ended, they asked her to stay on. And she did that, too.

"I was learning a lot during those years. And, I loved that it was so fast-paced. We would try something on Monday and you could tell if it was effective by Friday."

The 1980s and 1990s were a time of change in the ownership arena of several theme parks. Taft Broadcasting owned Kings Island in those early years. In 1984, Taft sold its theme park division to Kings Entertainment Co. (KECO), a company formed by several executives and general managers of Taft Attractions Group.

In 1985, Marriott Corp. sold its Great America theme park in Santa Clara, Calif., to the City of Santa Clara. The city then hired KECO to manage the park. Cooper, still in merchandising, was one of four people who relocated to Santa Clara to assist management.

It was a leap of faith, as she had never lived that far from home. But she was ready for the challenge. Little did she know that her leap would vault her to much higher levels.

In 1992, KECO was sold to Paramount, and about nine months later, Paramount became a part of Viacom.

"When that happened, a fair amount of the management team at Great America retired," Cooper said.

That led to her next jump: becoming the general manager of Great America.

Then, two years later, another leap. Cooper became president of Paramount Parks, headquartered in Charlotte, N.C. She took a tight grip on the reins and stayed there for the next 25 years, growing and changing with the company.

"Change is hard for some people," Cooper said. "But I love change. I am comfortable managing people. I know how important they are to the overall success."

And, she never shied away from opportunity. A part of that was becoming more active with IAAPA. When she left Paramount in 2002, she was moving through the chairmanship line of the association.

For the next two years, Cooper took the opportunity to work with several independent projects, including some part-time consulting with Herschend Family Entertainment (HFE). The company was on the verge of major growth and wanted her advice. She found that she liked the company's products, and in 2006, Cooper joined HFE as president and COO.

Cooper still has the passion and she is still active in IAAPA, particularly with the IAAPA Foundation.

"What we are doing in the foundation is trying to find a way to get young people to understand the breadth of the industry," she said. "We want to introduce young people to the careers that are here.

"I really want to give back to this industry and to the people that helped me. We all have had someone back there."

Cooper feels it is important for the industry to reach out to the new generation of young people, and that it is important for the industry to remain relevant.

"It takes a lot of hard work, though," she acknowledged.

When Cooper pauses to look back at what she has done, where she has gone and the people she has met, she concludes, humbly: "Yeah, that is pretty cool."

—Pam Sherborne

OBITUARIES

John 'Nick' L. Alberts, Reithoffer Shows

SUN CITY CENTER, Fla. — John "Nick" L. Alberts, a longtime employee with Reithoffer Shows of Gibsonton, passed away surrounded by friends and family on Oct. 2. He was 61.


Alberts

Known as a kind, spirited man who made friends easily and always left a smile on everyone's face, Alberts was born Dec. 6, 1956, to Joseph and Betty (Jessup) Alberts in Baltimore, Md. At the age of 14 he dedicated himself to the carnival business, spending 47 years with Reithoffer Shows up until his last days.

Alberts loved to entertain friends, family, and strangers alike. He had an appreciation for fishing, playing cards and everything related to Harley-Davidson. On any given day, he could be found on one of his bikes, at a card table playing poker or on a boat with a fishing pole. He loved spending time with family, eating his favorite food (spaghetti) and showing his true Maryland side with his craving for Tastykakes.

Alberts is survived by children Jerry Condo, Nick Alberts, Jordan Alberts and Julie Alberts; and grandchildren Anthony Condo and Meadow Alberts. He also is survived by siblings Helen Thornhill, Larry Green, June Hitt, Joseph Alberts, Jr., Betty Kirby, Loretta Murray, Toni Nuccio, Charlene Clapper, Jeff Alberts and Doug Alberts.

Roland K. Larson, former OABA director

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. — Roland A. Larson, a former national executive director of the Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA) and a longtime member of the Showmen's League of America, passed away Sept. 3 with his family by his side. He was 80.


Larson

Larson grew up in Slayton, Minn., and applied his agricultural roots to many organizational management and leadership roles, including the 4-H and various chambers of commerce early in his career. He then moved into a national executive directorship role with OABA and, finally, to real estate.

Retirement brought Larson more time to explore his passions, including Gideons International; Christ the King Lutheran Church; poetry and prose; the Twins, Gophers, and Vikings; and being with his family.

Larson is survived by his wife, Beverly, and children Amy Jo Coffey, Ann Benson and Carl Larson, as well as four grandchildren.

Mark J. Repine, top waterslide installer

ESTES PARK, Colo. — Mark J. Repine, a longtime attractions industry waterslide and conveyor installer, passed away suddenly on Aug. 14. He was 58.


Repine

As the owner of Trademark Enterprises, Inc., Repine was a top installer of waterslides for many manufacturers, including ProSlide, Van Stone Conveyor and WhiteWater West. He worked in parks across the U.S. and in the Bahamas. A native of the Pittsburgh area, he began his career in 1985 with the installation of a waterslide at Idlewild Park in Ligonier, Pa.

One of Repine's greatest joys was being on hand when a new ride opened. He loved seeing the children riding it and the joy it brought to them. It was while installing waterslides at Crystal Rapids in Loveland, Colo., that he discovered Estes Park, eventually moving there in 2003.

Repine is survived by his wife of 37 years, Rachelle; daughter Andrea Repine Van Cleve; son Garrett Repine; and his son and business partner, Chandler Repine.

ERRATUM

In the October issue of *Amusement Today*, an obituary for Bill Luehrs erroneously described his affiliation with Luehrs' Ideal Rides. He was not a co-owner; his siblings co-own the show. Bill Luehrs grew up on Luehrs' Ideal Rides. *AT* regrets the error.

Robert Cartmell, historian, artist and founding member of ACE, dies at 85

AT: *Richard Munch*
Special to Amusement Today

ALBANY, N.Y. — A pioneer in the resurgence of the roller coaster in the 1970s and a founding member of American Coaster Enthusiasts (ACE) has died.

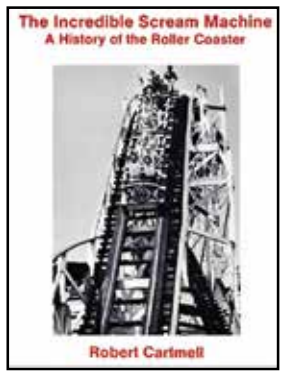
Dr. Robert M. Cartmell, a renowned historian who penned the original 1974 newspaper article that roused a generation of enthusiasts, passed away on Sept. 11 at his home. According to his wife, Diana Westbrook, he died of complications from a stroke he suffered in 2011. He was 85.

Born in Los Angeles on June 8, 1933, Cartmell moved around the country while his father was in the military. After serving in the Army and studying fine arts in Chicago and Iowa, he moved to New York in 1970 to begin his career as a professor at the State University of New York at Albany.

In Cartmell's travels, roller coasters were of great interest to him. On June 9, 1974, *The New York Times* published an article he wrote, "The Quest for the Ultimate Roller Coaster," which included his list of the 10 best coasters in the country. It helped spark several generations of enthusiasts and may have spurred attendance at many parks. He also created a traveling exhibition titled "Coast to Coast Coasters" for the Smithsonian Institution in 1975.

In 1978, Cartmell was instrumental in getting American Coaster Enthusiasts (ACE) off the ground. As keynote speaker during the organization's first convention in Williamsburg, Virginia, he would later become its first historian and honorary member. A month after this gathering, he spoke at the first Coastermania event in Sandusky, Ohio, hosted by Cedar Point.

During the early 1980s, Cartmell traveled extensively, updating his popular Top 10 coaster list. His celebrity status landed him in *Time*, *Newsweek* and a host of other magazines and newspapers. He spent nearly a decade writing the definitive book on the subject, *The Incredible Scream Machine*, published in 1987. In 1993, he received the coveted Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters Spirit of ACE Award and, in 2001, became the only individual to receive an Emeritus honorary award from ACE.



Alongside teaching, Cartmell enjoyed painting and was an internationally recognized artist. Roller coasters surfaced frequently in his work, which was showcased at galleries around the world. His final show, "Then & Now: Robert Cartmell," opened in Albany in late 2017.

While his other interests included writing, golf and automobiles, he clearly loved wooden coasters, suggesting they were symbolic of the ups and downs of life. Based on his many interests and accomplishments, there is no doubt that Robert Cartmell had a remarkable life.

Richard Munch is a founding member of ACE (president, 1978-82) and historian for the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives.







Dr. Robert Cartmell, shown with fellow ACE cofounder Richard Munch, received the Emeritus honorary award from the organization at Lake Compounce in Bristol, Conn., in 2001 — 20 years after he was photographed driving a bumper car at the same park. Cartmell's work as a historian, including his 1987 book *The Incredible Scream Machine*, renewed the public's fascination with coasters and embodied the spirit of ACE.
COURTESY RICHARD MUNCH COLLECTION; AT FILE


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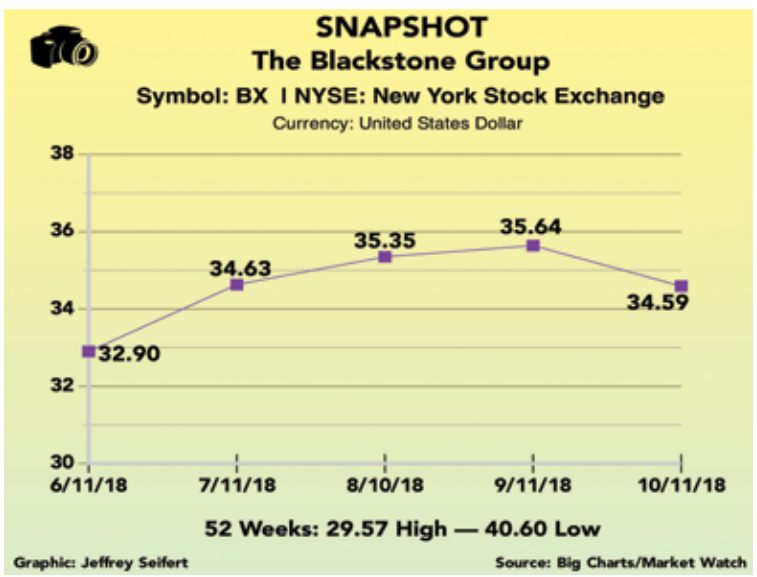
MARKET WATCH

COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 10/11/18	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	34.59	40.60	29.57
Merlin Entertainments Group / Legoland	MERL	LSE	374.90	460.80	317.10
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	54.40	70.82	50.1
Comcast Corp./NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	33.67	44.00	30.43
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	111.15	118.10	96.8
Dubai Parks & Resorts	DXBE:UH	DFM	0.36	0.80	0.32
EPR Properties	EPR	NYSE	66.7	71.43	51.87
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	3335.00	3750.00	2431.00
Haichang Holdings Ltd.	HK:2255	SEHK	1.50	2.30	1.46
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	5.79	8.26	5.51
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	25.95	38.41	25.7
Parques Reunidos Servicios Centrales S.A.	ES:PQR	MCE	10.44	15.45	10.12
Sansei Technologies, Inc.	JP:6357	TYO	1529.00	1864.00	930.00
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	28.51	32.47	10.42
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	65.43	73.38	58.76
DreamEast Group Ltd.	HK:0593	SEHK	10.48	15.88	8.46
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	598.00	704.00	545.00
Village Roadshow	AU:VRL	ASX	2.21	4.15	1.73

STOCK PRICES ABOVE ARE GENERALLY QUOTED IN THE FOREIGN CURRENCY IN WHICH THE COMPANY IS LOCATED

Worldwide Markets: ASX, Australian Securities Exchange; **CSE**, Copenhagen Stock Exchange; **LSE**, London Stock Exchange; **NYSE**, New York Stock Exchange; **NASDAQ**, National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations; **SEHK**, Hong Kong Stock Exchange; **SZSE**, Shenzhen Stock Exchange; **TSEC**, Taiwan Stock Excange, Corp.; **TYO/TSE**, Tokyo Stock Exchange

—SOURCES: Bloomberg.com; Wall Street Journal



DIESEL PRICES

Region (U.S.)	As of 10/08/18	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	$3.360	+$0.567
Midwest	$3.351	+$0.613
Gulf Coast	$3.169	+$0.570
Mountain	$3.390	+$0.534
West Coast	$3.558	+$0.575
California	$4.111	+$0.945

CURRENCY

On 10/12/18 $1 USD =	
0.8644	EURO
0.7565	GBP (British Pound)
112.19	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9885	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.4087	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.3041	CAD (Canadian Dollar)

BUSINESS WATCH

Cineplex reports a record second quarter

TORONTO — **Cineplex, Inc.**, reported record second quarter results for the period ending June 30, including increases in revenue across all reportable segments. Total revenue increased 12.4 percent to a second-quarter record of CA$409.1 million, while adjusted EBITDA increased 78.3 percent to a second-quarter record of CA$67.8 million versus the same period last year. Box office revenue increased 9.7 percent to CA$187.2 million because of a five percent increase in attendance resulting from the quarter's strong film product. Among other segments showing impressively, amusement revenue increased 6.3 percent to $48.5 million because of contributions from additional locations of **The Rec Room** entertainment center brand. Accomplishments during the quarter included the opening of the fifth location of The Rec Room in London, Ontario, and the opening of a new theater in Calgary, Alberta. Additionally, **Player One Amusement Group** announced an agreement with the company's **Cinemark** theater chain to install and operate amusement gaming equipment in 270-plus U.S. locations. Post-quarter, Cineplex announced an agreement with **The Void** to expand in the virtual reality market.

Cinergy uses Intercard technology in Texas

AMARILLO, Texas — St. Louis, Mo.-based **Intercard** recently installed its cashless technology at the new **Cinergy Entertainment Center** in Amarillo — the fourth Cinergy location to use the system. The new facility covers 90,000 square feet and offers 18 lanes of upscale bowling, laser tag, virtual reality, 4D attractions, escape rooms, and a game floor with more than 100 interactive games and a redemption center. It also features 10 movie auditoriums with the latest seating, projection and sound equipment, plus two full-service bars and a variety of dining options, including in-theater dining. Intercard's technology is an important component of Cinergy's operations, which are 100 percent cashless.

Gateway among 'best places to work' again

GILBERTSVILLE, Pa. — **Gateway Ticketing Systems** has been named one of the **Best Places to Work in Pa.** for 2018. This is Gateway's sixth time receiving the award, which identifies the best places of employment in Pennsylvania that are benefiting the state's economy and its workforce. "With this being our 30th year in business, it is a great honor to receive the [award] for a sixth time," said **Michael Andre**, Gateway's president and CEO. "Thirty years of success as a company comes from having amazing team members building a culture of long-term relationships with exceptional customers. We proudly receive this award because it's a reflection of our wonderful people and the values they live every day at Gateway." Final award rankings will be revealed at a banquet ceremony in November in Lancaster, Pa.

SeaWorld settles SEC investigation for $5M

ORLANDO, Fla. — Amid still-lingering fallout from the controversial 2013 documentary *Blackfish*, **SeaWorld Entertainment** and former CEO **Jim Atchison** have agreed on a $5 million settlement with the **U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission** (SEC) over federal accusations that the company did not properly disclose to investors the impact of the film on SeaWorld's reputation and business. Atchison's contribution to the resolution will be $1 million. The settlement reportedly includes neither an admission nor denial of wrongdoing by the parties. **Frederick D. Jacobs**, SeaWorld's former vice president of communications, who assisted in the SEC investigation, has agreed to relinquish $100,000 in compensation and interest to settle a related fraud charge.

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2018 GOLDEN TICKET AWARDS – SILVER DOLLAR CITY

For the first time, the Best of the Best were acknowledged on water

2018 Golden Ticket Awards set sail aboard Showboat Branson Belle

AT: *Tim Baldwin*
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

BRANSON, Mo. — The forecast was foreboding. On September 7, Tropical Storm Gordon had come ashore and was making a beeline for Springfield, Mo. Organizers were fearing the 2018 Golden Ticket Awards would become the Gordon Ticket Awards. Mother Nature can always deliver a variable that can make best-laid plans all for naught.

Fortunately, the storm went eastward and no more than an occasional light drizzle even thought about dampening the Networking Event of the Year.

After checking in at the **Hilton Hotel** at Branson Landing, attendees received goodie bags filled with items from **Silver Dollar City**, *Amusement Today* and Branson area attractions. A new model constructed by the **National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives** was on display offering industry professionals a more detailed glimpse of the progress taking place and what is to come.

Once at the park, the fun began for everyone who had traveled to the Missouri tourist destination. Early arrivers got to enjoy all that Silver Dollar City has to offer — the food, the entertainment, crafts and some very one-of-a-kind rides in the industry. As evening approached, management had wisely decided to place reception meals indoors as the original forecast was for flooding rains. **Brad Thomas**, park president of Silver Dollar City, as well as **Jack and Pete Herschend** welcomed attendees assembled in one of the park's main food halls. After being treated to appetizers, a complete dinner and desserts, Golden Ticket Awards guests made their way to several rides on offer. The brand-new Time Traveler, supplied by **Mack Rides**, **Rocky Mountain Construction**'s Outlaw Run, The Giant Barn Swing from **S&S Worldwide** and an old-school **Arrow** mine train provided some evening thrills.

On Saturday, September 8, a full schedule awaited those attending the event. Starting with an available breakfast at the park, industry professionals enjoyed all sorts of perks, including a Super Trailblazer Pass that allowed quick access to all major rides and attractions.

Three tours were made available for visitors. A behind-the-scenes tour of the park's Christmas event began with a brief history of the festival from Thomas and how it has evolved. Participants were then shown up-close demonstrations of how the dazzling decorations were created and efficiently stored. Others opted for an event-only culinary class that took place in the park's culinary school where participants were able to sample the dishes created. A crafts tour was also offered.

Still, others made a point to journey deep into Marvel Cave located underneath the park and the reason the park got started. Tours are available

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Above, industry presenters gathered for a group shot following the Golden Ticket ceremony aboard the Showboat Branson Belle. Below, the 2018 Golden Ticket winners showed off their 2018 awards. AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON

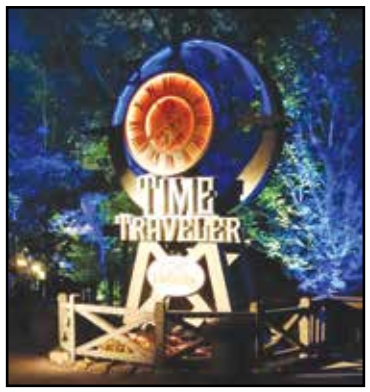




At left, legends meet: l to r, Brad Thomas, Pete Herschend, Thomas Mack, Roland Mack, Jack Herschend, Sherry Herschend. An opening reception (right) allowed time for introductions, networking, food and welcome. COURTESY SILVER DOLLAR CITY



2018 GOLDEN TICKET AWARDS – SILVER DOLLAR CITY



Robert Spakanik and Clair Haines of Great Coasters International network with Holiday World's Leah and Lori Koch (left). Selected rides were open for the evening reception, including the new-for-2018 Time Traveler (center). Participants on the Christmas tour (right) observed how the park created and stored its incredible decorations. AT/TIM BALDWIN

GTA

Continued from page 60

to all guests each day the park is open.

Once evening arrived, attendees made their way to the **Showboat Branson Belle**, either on their own or by provided coaches. Networking opportunities were prevalent both at the landing dock as professionals gathered and during a cocktail reception once aboard the Showboat.

During dinner, passengers were thoroughly entertained through music and laughter provided by the Showboat Branson Belle band and performers or comedian/magician Christopher James who served as emcee for the awards ceremony.

Several attendees were called up to the stage to participate in some comical antics. The results were as predicted — hysterical.

Once the Golden Ticket Awards officially began, it was a night of tremendous fun, wacky stunts, tender moments and cheering accolades.

In snatching the Best Food category away from **Dollywood** once again, **Dick Knoebel** of **Knoebels Amusement Resort** accepted in full chef wardrobe. His son, **Brian Knoebel**, when accepting for Best Carousel with brother **Rick**, noted, "Just a few days after being born in the hospital, before we went home for the first time, Rick and I had our first ride on the Grand Carousel with our parents. I think we are still dizzy." All three gentlemen formed a coaster train to accept for the surprise win of the park's venerable Phoenix overtaking the category for Best Wooden Coaster.




Nick and Angela Paradise take in the awards evening. The Showboat landing made time for fun photos. AT/B. DEREK SHAW; COURTESY SILVER DOLLAR CITY

A soulful rendition of "Desperado" sung by performer **Kelsie Watts** had attendees reflecting on industry members lost over the past year.

Karen Oertley and **Tim Viox** presented two prestigious awards for Safety on behalf of **AIMS**. **Pat Hoffman** accepted his in person, and **Carol Moore**, the wife of **Mark Moore**, was visibly moved at the posthumous award when she accepted on behalf of his memory. [Details of these acknowledgements were covered in the previous issue of *Amusement Today*.]

After an invigorating and celebratory ceremony came to a close, a climb to the upper deck found the party continuing with live music, a dessert bar and cocktails, as well as a special fireworks display set off over Table Rock Lake just for the Showboat.

In his welcome earlier that evening, Thomas asked the audience how many were visiting Branson for the first time. A significant number of professionals raised their hands.

"There has always been a mythology surrounding Branson," said **Franceen Gonzales**, **WhiteWater West**. "But I've never been. This has been great."

"The overall Golden Ticket event was excellent as usual, and I could not believe the hospitality of the entire town of Branson. What truly genuine people," said **Patty Beazley**, **International Ride Training, LLC**. "Silver Dollar City did a remarkable job hosting. The hospitality and food were outstanding. The Golden Ticket Awards were so fun and unique being presented on the Branson Belle."

Beazley added, "I was extremely pleased and honored that one of my dearest industry friends, Mark Moore, received posthumously the AIMS

See GTA, page 62





The craft tour allowed attendees to see artisans at work (left) and take an occasional taste. *AT* publisher Gary Slade is interviewed prior to the ceremony (right).
AT/SAMMY PICCOLA; B. DEREK SHAW



2018 GOLDEN TICKET AWARDS – SILVER DOLLAR CITY

Miss and Mr. Golden Tickets welcome winners on land and sea

AT: *Tim Baldwin*
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

For the 14th year, *Amusement Today* recognized a group of young professionals who are dedicating careers to the amusement industry. Dubbed Miss and Mr. Golden Tickets, four individuals not only assisted with presenting the awards during the ceremony aboard the Showboat Branson Belle, but dressed in Time Traveler regalia as attendees arrived at the landing. Many industry visitors were seen taking a picture or selfie with the time-traveling hosts prior to the ceremony.

Miss and Mr. Golden Tickets exemplify the spirit and integrity of the amusement industry by promoting the cornerstones of safety, service, courtesy and cleanliness at the highest level, while consistently exceeding job expectations.

Following a welcome to all attendees by Silver Dollar City Park President Brad Thomas, Golden Ticket Awards Communications Coordinator Tim Baldwin introduced the group to the audience, with Thomas remaining on stage to congratulate each individual.





The Miss and Mr. Golden Tickets welcomed event attendees (left) to the Showboat Branson Belle landing. Pictured (right) from l to r: Kortney Cambers, Cooper St. John, Park President Brad Thomas, Lauren Presley and Dalton Fischer.
COURTESY SILVER DOLLAR CITY; AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON

Each received their own personalized Golden Ticket as well as an *Amusement Today* subscription and gift card for career supplies. *AT* congratulates the class of 2018 Miss and Mr. Golden Tickets:

Lauren Presley: Marketing Intern (Silver Dollar City, White Water & Showboat Branson Belle) Presley is a senior at College of the Ozarks graduating in December with a degree in Publicity and Communications. Her family owns Presley's Theater, a Branson staple for 52 years.

Dalton Fischer: Publicist (Silver Dollar City, White Water & Showboat Branson Belle) Fischer graduated from Missouri State in May with a degree in Marketing with a concentration in Sales & Sales Management. He also served as an ambassador at the IAAPA Expo in 2017 and will do so again this year.

Cooper St. John: Maintenance & Construction Intern (Silver Dollar City) St. John entered Missouri University of Science & Technology this fall with a major in Mechanical Engineering.

Kortney Cambers: Guest Services Intern (White Water) Cambers is a Communications major at College of the Ozarks.

Heard at the 2018 GTAs

"Just hearing Jack and Pete Herschend speak was wonderful!"
— **Pamela Landwirth, Give Kids the World**

"I hope you are not in the business of building things."
— Emcee **Christopher James** to **Mack Rides' Thorsten Koebele** (upon his breaking the cymbals in the magician's act)

"The conversations I've had this weekend have been invaluable."
— **Chris Ozimek, Crayola Experience**

"This has been an outstanding weekend. To be able to host the amusement industry professionals here. It's just a wonderful time to get everybody together. It's like an amusement industry reunion tonight."
— **Gary Slade, *Amusement Today***

"You know you're getting older when you have two spotters to help you up the stairs."
— **Patty Beazley, International Ride Training**

"There was nothing in his life that Mark [Moore] didn't do whole-heartedly."
— **Tim Viox, AIMS** (in presenting the AIMS Int'l Lifetime Contribution Award in memory of Mark Moore)

"Silver Dollar City has such fantastic employees. It was a joy to visit the park and experience the property over several days. Marvel Cave continues to be an amazing experience.
— **Adam Sandy, Ride Entertainment**

"Do you think we could host these in Germany?"
— **Roland Mack, Europa-Park** (departing the Branson Belle)

"If there is one man close enough to God to influence rain to go the other direction, it's Brad Thomas."
— **Tim Baldwin, *Amusement Today***

▶GTA
Continued from page 61

Lifetime Contribution Award. Through my many years of working closely with Mark, no one realizes how much he did for our industry and the AIMS organization."

Winners and presenters gathered for photos following the close of the show.

"It was so fun to be a part of the Golden Ticket festivities as a presenter," said **Lynn Alexander**, **Rocky Mountain Amusements**, presenting for the first time. "And it was the perfect opportunity to wear my roller coaster tiara."

Returning presenter **Jack Mendes** of **Bob's Space Racers** said, "I was pleased to be a presenter again. I consider it an honor and privilege."

Networking (and good laughs) continued late into the night at the host hotel upon return.

Attendees with flexible schedules or extra time were invited to visit area attractions on Sunday, and several made a point to experience the beautiful **Top of the Rock** a few miles to the south, or even see more of Silver Dollar City.

The 2019 Golden Ticket Awards are scheduled for September 6 and 7. They will be hosted by **Silverwood Theme Park** in Athol, Idaho. A visit to nearby **Rocky Mountain Construction** is included.





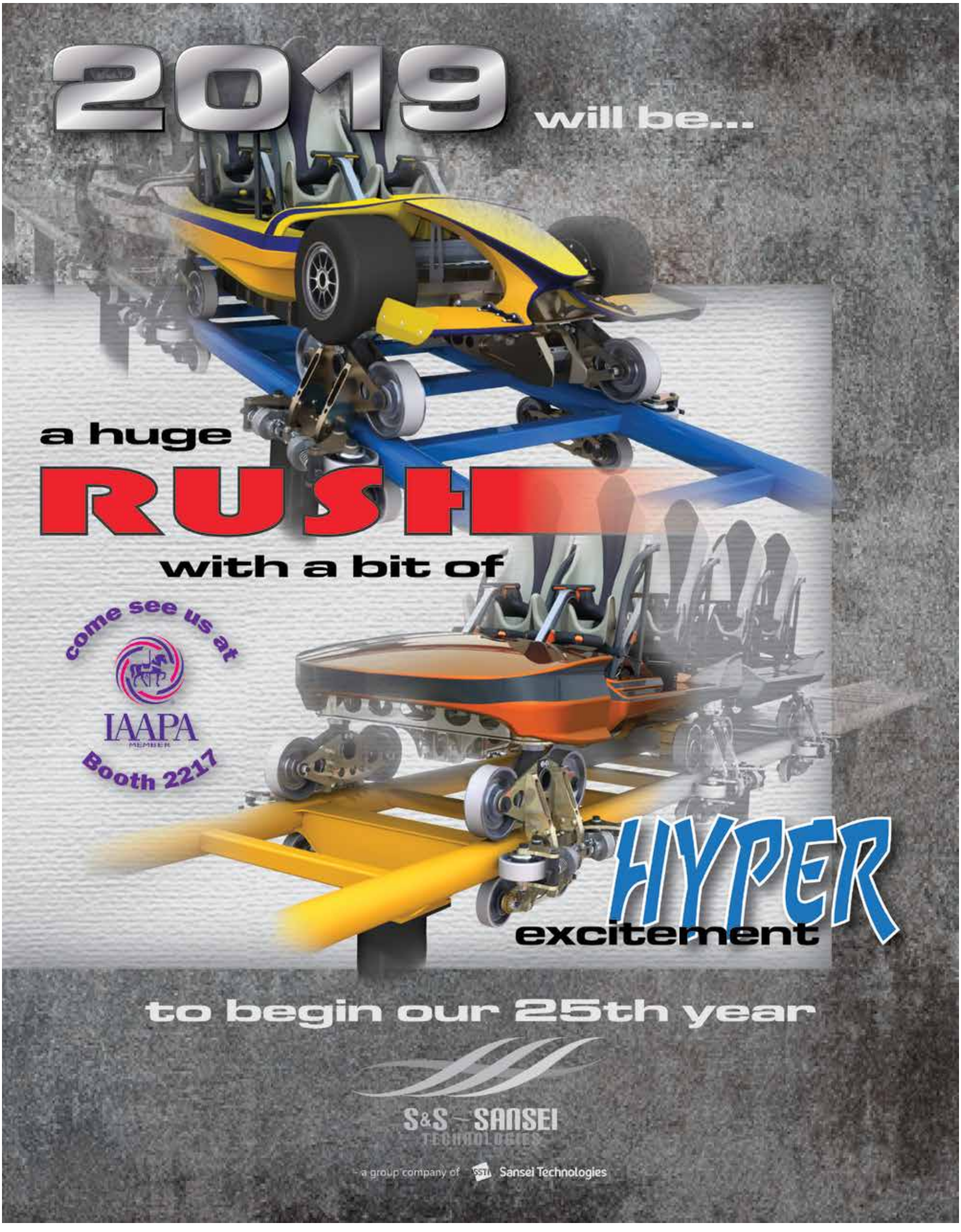
Carol Moore accepting for her late husband made for a touching moment (left). Terri Adams accepts (right) for Schlitterbahn's undefeated win for Best Water Park.
AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON



Accepting in true Knoebels fashion, the Knoebel men form a train to accept for Best Wooden Coaster.
AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON



Lilia Bastrup became foiled in emcee Christopher James' game.
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with a bit of
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S&S – SANSEI
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SAFETY, MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

IAAPA Safety Forum meets in Cancun — page 66 / Gardaland promotes accessible tourism — page 74

Busch Gardens' Loch Ness Monster celebrates 40 years; new carriages

AT: *Tim Baldwin*
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. — Loch Ness Monster has a long history at Busch Gardens Williamsburg, 40 years to be exact. It was a landmark attraction in its day and is still thrilling riders daily. The interlocking, double loops have been a symbol of this park since 1978, and it remains a fan favorite to this day.

Busch Gardens has done a noteworthy job accentuating the anniversary via signage, promotions and merchandise. Beginning on June 6, the park featured a number of special activities and offers marking the celebration, including a $40 single-day admission ticket in honor of the iconic coaster's big day. The anniversary festivities included a variety of in-park deals, such as a summer drink special as a nod to the park's rich heritage, Loch Ness Monster pretzels, yellow and green colored doughnuts, a special souvenir cup, 40-cent beer in the Festhaus and unique photo opportunities. In addition, Nessie's coaster trains were refurbished, renovations were made to the ride station and the mountain cave came back to life as Nessie's anniversary gift to park guests.





Loch Ness Monster's iconic interlocking loops (left) were a worldwide sensation when the coaster opened in 1978. The new carriages (right) were adorned with an anniversary logo for 2018. AT/GARY SLADE; TIM BALDWIN

"Guest reaction has been overwhelmingly positive," said Director of Consumer Activation Cindy Sarko, Busch Gardens. "Many remember this coaster as their first thrill roller coaster experience when they were younger, and now they want to share the experience with their family. It's really fun to see."

Sarko noted that American Coaster Enthusiasts were founded at the base this legendary roller coaster in 1978. It is a rare historical footnote for the ride and the park. "The club recognized the Loch Ness Monster as an ACE Roller Coaster Landmark in 2003 (on its 25th anniversary). We couldn't be more honored," Sarko told *Amusement Today*. Both the coaster and the world's largest coaster enthusiast organization celebrate 40th anniversaries together.



Busch Gardens offers behind-the-scenes tours to guests to spotlight the maintenance and operations of Loch Ness Monster. AT/TIM BALDWIN

AT talked with Larry Giles, senior director, Park Attractions & Engineering, SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment, about the continued maintenance and renovation of this legendary monster.

AT: In a recent address to coaster fans when you served as vice president of engineering and maintenance at Busch Gardens Williamsburg, you explained how Loch Ness Monster was able to have a lengthier longevity than Drachen Fire, another Arrow looping coaster at the park. Elaborate.

Giles: The design of the Loch Ness Monster met with the current level of manufacturing available at the time. While ahead of its day in design, the manufacturing techniques in the mid-70s delivered a great ride experience even to this day. Drachen Fire ran into the age of computer design that allowed designers more elaborate options for the ride experience, but manufacturing could not build to the precise levels needed for the level of ride expected in the current age of coasters.

The park decided to invest in new carriages (or bodies) for the trains. What factors went into this decision? Why was this the right time?

The coaster train carriages were from the original design and would need replacement at some point in the future. We decided to give Nessie a great anniversary present to celebrate her 40th, and our guests are thrilled with the gift, too.



Giles

With Arrow technically gone, how difficult was it to recreate these fiberglass bodies?

It wasn't at all. We worked closely with S&S Worldwide who had the molds for the coaster's actual body. Fortunately for us, there were only slight differences from the original which was built in 1978.

Which parts of the undercarriages were you able to keep, and through this refurbishment process did those parts receive any improvements?

Our experienced maintenance team was able to reuse the frames and bodies of the original vehicles. The team also completed normal maintenance on the bearings and other moving parts on the coaster.

New rides come with newer technology. What keeps Loch Ness Monster healthy?

I believe it goes back to the original design. The Loch Ness Monster provided big thrills combined with a great ride experience, and with continued maintenance and inspection of the vehicles, track, lift and control systems, Nessie can continue to thrill future generations.

Any observations you would give younger hires to look for when keeping an older ride maintained?

Busch Gardens has an experienced, knowledgeable team of ride mechanics who take personal ownership of each ride and attraction. They are very familiar with the ride intricacies and with their skill they keep every ride and attraction at Busch Gardens running at top notch. We place our new employees with experienced ride mechanics so they're able to learn from the best. They pass on their passion and expertise they can only get from working at our parks.

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Industry, experts hold IAAPA forum in Cancun

AT: *Dean Lamanna*
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IAAPA Global Safety Committee Chairman Jim Seay (center, white shirt), president of Premier Rides, is flanked by other global industry participants in the IAAPA Safety Forum in Cancun, Mexico. COURTESY DAVID BROMILOW, MOBARO

CANCUN, Mexico — Attraction operators and owners, and safety professionals, from around the world gathered in the Mexican resort city of Cancun on Sept. 10-11 to take part in a first-of-its-kind safety meeting.

Organized by the **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions** (IAAPA) and its Global Safety Committee, the **IAAPA Safety Forum** focused on fostering a deep-rooted culture of safety across all facets of the attractions industry.

The IAAPA Safety Forum was hosted by **Ventura Entertainment's Ventura Park**. As part of the event, more than 140 attendees also were able to join an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of the park.

Safety is the number-one priority of the industry. The IAAPA Safety Forum provided an opportunity to examine issues around creating and maintaining comprehensive safety programs, and to learn the latest developments and best practices in ride standards, loss prevention, risk management, ride design and safety compliance.

Jim Seay, chairman of the IAAPA Global Safety Committee and president of **Premier Rides**, moderated one of the event's two panel discussions.

"It's important to bring together regulators, safety experts, industry consultants, manufacturers, and operators from all corners of the business so that we can learn from each other," Seay said. "Through insightful presentations and frank discussions, we were able to connect industry professionals to have a better understanding of the issues we face. The forum was an important next step… [it] will certainly leave a lasting impression and impact safety practices around the world."

The IAAPA Safety Forum also provided industry stakeholders with direct access to the world's leading safety experts during an interactive program. Attendees from all position levels and companies took part in the session. Invited stakeholders included government officials; operators of both portable and fixed rides; safety consultants; operators of theme parks, amusement parks and water parks; hotels and resorts; facilities that offer dolphin swim programs; operators of inflatables and carnivals; consumer advocates, manufacturers and suppliers; and ride inspectors.

"Taking part in the first IAAPA Safety Forum allowed us to meet and talk with respected industry leaders from amusement parks and attractions," said **Reyna Nuñez**, head of corporate risk analysis and integral safety for **Experiencias Xcaret**. "We discussed their points of view and recommendations, shared advice and experience, and so much more... to help create a vision for a better future for our industry. And what better place to do this than in the **Riviera Maya**?"

"The forum exceeded our expectations," said **Carlos Limon**, safety corporate director, **Grupo Vidanta**. "We had the opportunity to learn industry safety best practices from international experts. Endorsing and supporting a culture of safety at our organization helps provide added value to our guest experience."

"I was delighted to have the opportunity to participate on the expert panel and to be a part of this first IAAPA Safety Forum in Latin America," said **David Bromilow**, amusement parks and attractions director for Denmark-based **Mobaro**. "The feedback and enthusiasm were outstanding."

"We were excited Cancun was selected as the host location for the IAAPA Safety Forum," said **Paulina Reyes**, vice president of Latin American Operations at IAAPA. "It was the perfect location, as Mexico is experiencing rapid growth and development in the attractions and theme park industry. The forum brought industry professionals together for honest and open discussions."

•iaapa.org

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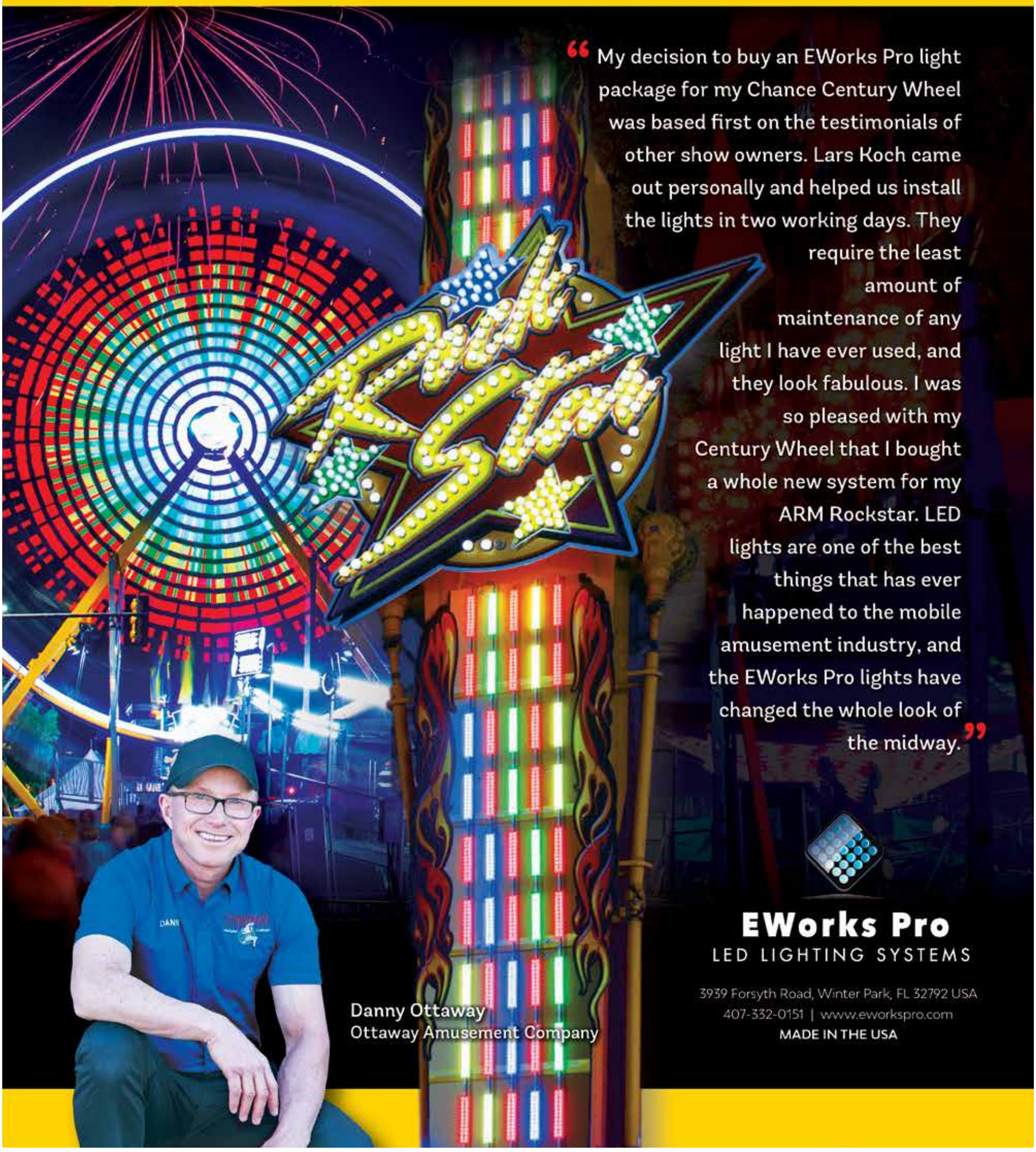
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OABA, CSSI partnership raises bar on safety

New member benefit enhances background checks, hiring process

WINTER PARK, Fla. — The **Outdoor Amusement Business Association** (OABA) recently announced a partnership with **Corporate Security Solutions, Inc.** (CSSI), a Lake Mary, Fla.-based online background check company, to create a new benefit for its members.

The partnership represents a potentially valuable safety initiative designed to enhance hiring standards, reduce costs, and keep patrons and the workplace safe.

Background checks are an essential safety measure for the mobile amusement industry, but they can sometimes be a logistical and financial challenge.

According to a release issued by OABA in August, its partnership with CSSI will simplify and lower the cost of background checks for members. CSSI features an online background check platform that uses proprietary technologies and unique criminal locators to deliver high-quality and accurate background checks.

CSSI's Tri-Eye check will be used as a basis for all background checks for OABA members. This includes not only name, address, and Social Security verification, but an enhanced national criminal database search and searches of the National Sex Offender Registry (Megan's Law), the **Office of Inspector General** (OIG) sanctions list and the terrorist watch list. Each member will have their own separate, secured online portal. Once the information is entered, results are produced in minutes.

OABA has arranged a per-check discount price for OABA members and even bigger discounts for Circle of Excellence recipients amounting to an additional 15 percent off.

CSSI is known for providing a full suite of pre-employment screening services including criminal history searches, employment verifications, education verifications, credit reports, identity checks, and lab-based services such as drug screening and **U.S. Department of Transportation** (DOT) compliance. In addition to background screening, it offers private investigation and corporate litigation services. The company has more than 35 years of experience in providing corporate security and investigative services, including work with Fortune 500 clients.

OABA has been working closely with CSSI's **Stephanie Glysson** to introduce the company's capabilities to its members. Glysson can be reached at (800) 203-4731. Additional information can be found at the company's website: eyeforsecurity.com.

For more on OABA, visit oaba.org.

—Dean Lamanna

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Registration now open for the #1 safety seminar worldwide!

With more than 450 students expected, it's time to sign up for the **2019 AIMS Safety Seminar** — taking place in Galveston, Texas, Jan. 13-18, 2019 — and select from more than 200 different class offerings that best fit your needs. Many new and updated classes added this year include hands-on training at the **Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier**.

Tuition is $645 when you register by Dec.1. It includes all class materials, two daily snack breaks and lunch each day, plus an opening reception and an evening event at the pier. Testing and **AIMS** Certifications offered at the seminar include Maintenance, Operations and Ride Inspection, and Aquatics. Attendees can register for added certification in CPO (Certified Pool Operator) and **OSHA** 10. Certificates in Security, Waterpark, Leadership, Carnival, FEC and **ASTM** F770 are available.

AIMS has secured a discounted hotel rate of $115 per night at the **Hilton Galveston Island Resort** for all attendees. For those traveling by air, we recommend **William P. Hobby International Airport** in Houston. From there, it is an easy drive to Galveston and there is no charge for parking at the hotel. Shuttle service to and from the airport is available and should be booked in advance.

A complete schedule and class list, along with hotel and other information, can be found at aimsintl.org. For more information about the AIMS Safety Seminar, please email info@aimsintl.org or contact **Holly Coston**, seminar manager, at (714) 697-6654.

Safety Seminar Scholarships available

IAAPA provides five scholarships to the AIMS Safety Seminar in memory of **Alan Ramsay.** Application forms can be found at aimsintl.org. The **Outdoor Amusement Business Association** (OABA) offers four scholarships (one in memory of **June Hardin**) to OABA members who are first-time Safety Seminar attendees. Contact oaba@oaba.org for more information.

Support AIMS as a Seminar Sponsor

AIMS International is a non-profit association. Industry support of this important annual Safety Seminar is vital to the health and prosperity of the entire amusement industry. For information on sponsorship, please contact Karen Oertley at (714) 425.5747 or email k.oertley@aimsintl.org.

Silent Auction items needed!

The **AIMS Silent Auction** is one of the highlights of the week during the Safety Seminar.

It gives everyone a chance to bid on all kinds of fun items and helps support our continuing efforts to upgrade classroom equipment. We are looking for all kinds of amusement industry merchandise, such as shirts, bags, hats, etc. Plush and other industry souvenirs that attendees can bring home to the kiddos are always popular. Please contact Holly Coston at h.coston@aimsintl.org for information on where to send your items.

During IAAPA Attractions Expo 2018, please stop by and visit AIMS International at booth #4527!

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www.paceseminar.com/index.html

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Pennsylvania Amusement Ride Safety Seminar
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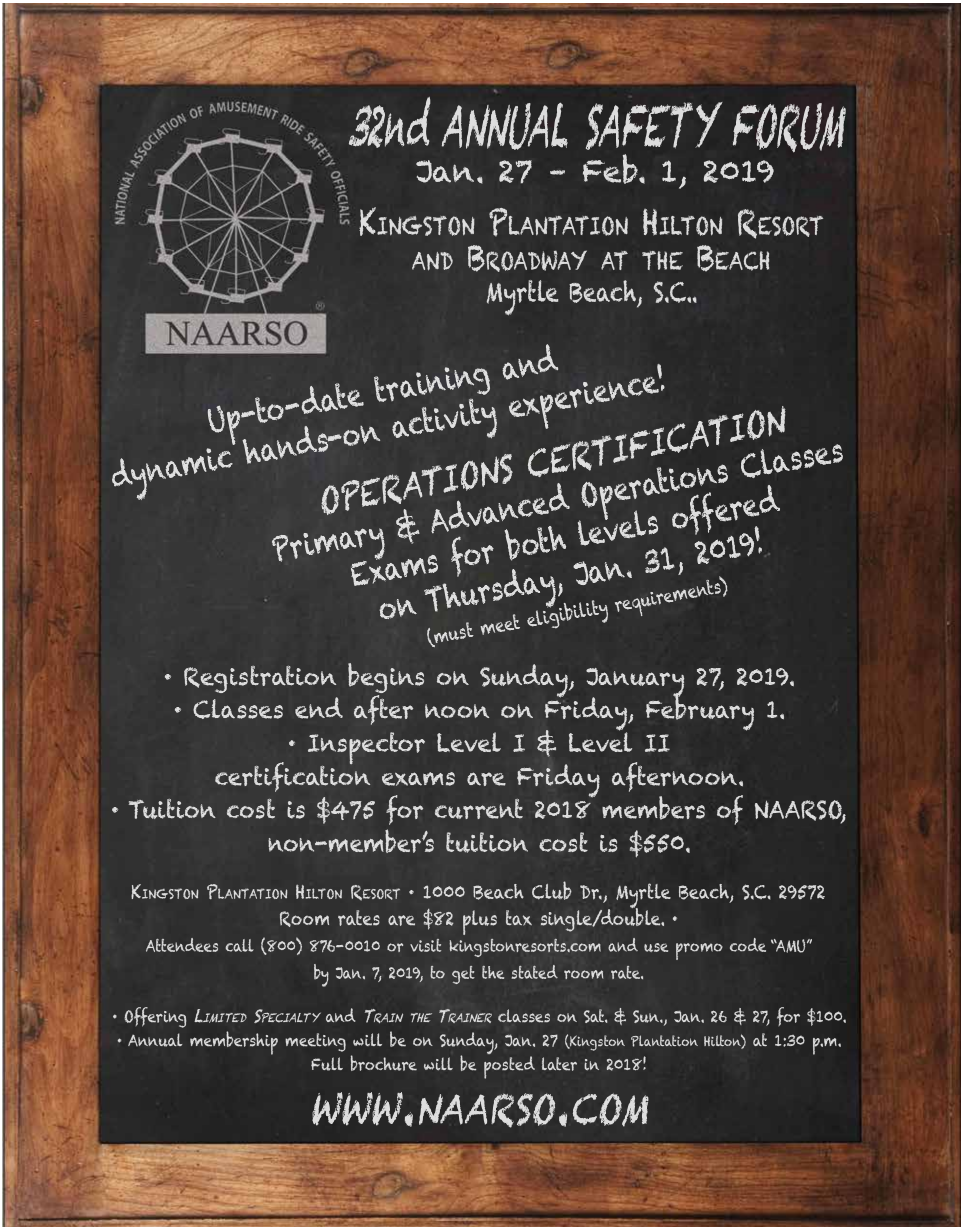
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Gardaland promotes accessible tourism with two-day meeting

September gathering, called Gardaland 4 All, benefited park, guests

AT: *Dean Lamanna*
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com







The Gardaland 4 All initiative has increased the accessibility of Gardaland's attractions for park guests with physical, cognitive and sensorial disabilities. COURTESY GARDALAND

VERONA, Italy — Ahead of World Tourism Day on Sept. 27, **Gardaland** conducted two days of meetings that brought together participants representing 13 national associations advocating for people with disabilities.

The Sept. 19-20 gathering, part of park initiative called **Gardaland 4 All**, drew 34 participants and was designed largely to serve as an opportunity for mutual learning. It also allowed the resort to demonstrate its efforts to make its park, attractions and facilities more accessible to all.

The resort's Gardaland 4 All initiative, a collaboration with **Village 4 All**, was launched in 2016 with a similar forum for sharing ideas to improve the park experience for guests with physical, cognitive and sensorial disabilities. It has resulted in positive changes at the property that address guest accessibility and park receptiveness.

Participants in the September gathering were able to test and evaluate certain rides, including the recently upgraded, pirate-themed dark boat ride I Corsari, the **Vekoma** mine train coaster Mammut, the **Bolliger & Mabillard** (B&M) dive coaster Oblivion — The Black Hole and the scenic tower ride Flying Island.

Prior to the conference, Gardaland invited registered participants to visit the park as "mystery guests." The aim was to gather evaluations on the everyday accessibility of the park's rides for discussion at the meeting. Central to the event was a round-table discussion in which participants offered their suggestions to make the park more user-friendly from different ability-level standpoints.

Several proposals emerged from the meeting. One was simplifying the layout of the park's visitor map and indicating the most efficient routes to reach various attractions. Another involved improving the availability of information regarding accessibility through apps and other means to enhance visit preplanning.

Other suggestions included offering comfort areas for guide dogs and introducing "decompression" rooms for guests who are extra-sensitive to the stimuli of a theme park environments.

"We have met many associations that follow people with particular needs, and together we have discussed projects, ideas and suggestions to make Gardaland become even more inclusive," said **Danio Santi**, theme park general manager, who acknowledged the resort's

▸ **See GARDALAND, page 75**



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Gardaland's two-day conference in September drew 34 participants representing 13 national associations advocating for those with different types of disabilities. COURTESY GARDALAND



GARDALAND

Continued from page 74

need to analyze issues and weigh limitations in order to ensure safety for all guests. "A great project we are currently working on is a games area dedicated to all children, even those with specific needs, so that they can all have a great time in a totally inclusive park."

A fruitful result of Gardaland 4 All has been the introduction of the Easy Rider staff escorting service, devised in collaboration with the association **Progetto Yeah!** Available from April to July and also during September, Easy Rider creates personalized itineraries based on different guest needs, explains each ride's characteristics and makes reservations for guests at restaurants inside the park. Guides help ensure that guests with disabilities such as visual limitations, reduced mobility, autism and Down syndrome are able to enjoy the park.

Gardaland has improved accessibility in other ways.

An agreement between the park and **CoorDown Onlus**, an association representing people with Down syndrome, regulates access to rides for Down syndrome guests while ensuring compliance with safety norms related to evacuation. For example, Down syndrome guests can ride Gardaland's B&M wing coaster Raptor with a signed waiver.

Other improvements include the introduction of a welcome desk with specially trained personnel and the availability of guides dedicated to accommodating guests with certain types of cognitive, physical and sensorial disabilities.

The net result is that guests who are partially or totally visually impaired now can access all of Gardaland's rides, while those with other physical and cognitive disabilities are enjoying increased accessibility to them. The park continues to work toward improving and increasing the accessibility of its attractions for all of its guests.

• **gardaland.it/en**





New organization aims to support attractions training globally

Attractions Academy looks to fill void in training development

AT: *Dean Lamanna*
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

WANTIMA SOUTH, Victoria, Australia — A new organization has been established with the goal to fill the ever-growing need for professional attractions training planning, development and delivery services throughout the global attractions and theme parks industry.

Called **Attractions Academy**, the endeavor was founded and is led by **Shaun McKeogh**, a 21-year industry veteran. In addition to delivering attractions-specific training and human resources solutions through the likes of **MRProFun**, **Village Roadshow Theme Parks** and **Farah Experiences**, he has provided training expertise for attractions including **The Exploratorium San Francisco**, **Warner Bros Movie World Australia**, **Gardens by the Bay Singapore**, **Sea World Australia**, **Omaha Children's Museum**, **Wet 'n' Wild Sydney** and **Ferrari World Abu Dhabi**.





Shaun McKeogh, founder and president of Attractions Academy, offers to provide the global attractions industry with training standards and solutions. COURTESY ATTRACTIONS ACADEMY

McKeogh observed that while millions of dollars are spent each year on planning and capital investment in theme parks, museums, family entertainment centers, water parks and visitor attractions, very little budget or planning is devoted to developing the people who will deliver the product.

"The quality of the guest experience delivered is critically impacted by the selection, skills and engagement of the team members working within the attraction," he said.

According to McKeogh, this need is most evident in Asia, where China is expected to be the largest theme park market in the world within the next few years.

"Almost every new attraction project in Asia claims that they will offer an international standard, world-class attraction experience, yet only a very small number of these attractions invest in planning for recruiting, training and keeping motivated the team members at the quality level required to sustain world-class standards," he said.

Attractions Academy aims to provide the training-related pre-opening planning, development and delivery support required to deliver a world-class attraction experience. Attractions training planning and delivery requires quality industry-focused programs, such as induction, train-the-trainer, leadership and service excellence systems, among other solutions, according to the McKeogh.

Attractions Academy is a member of the **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions** and the **World Waterpark Association**.

• **attractionsacademy.com**



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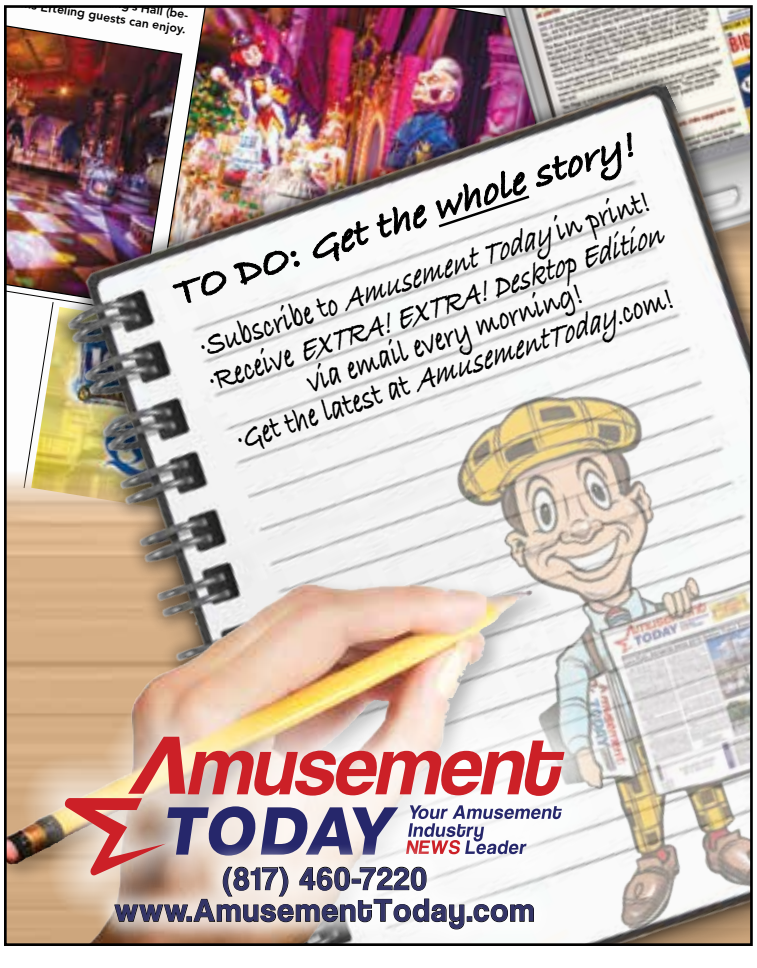
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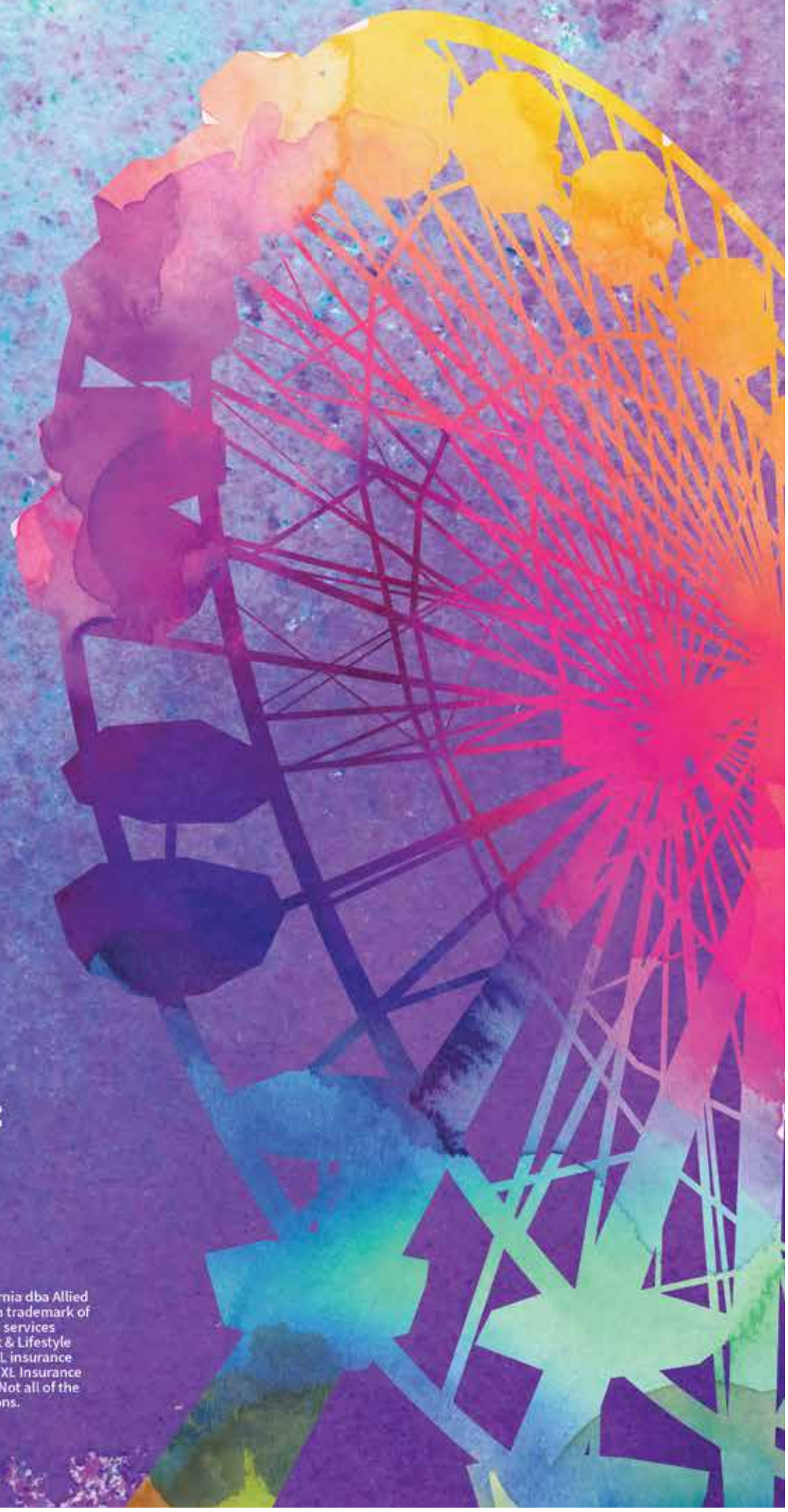


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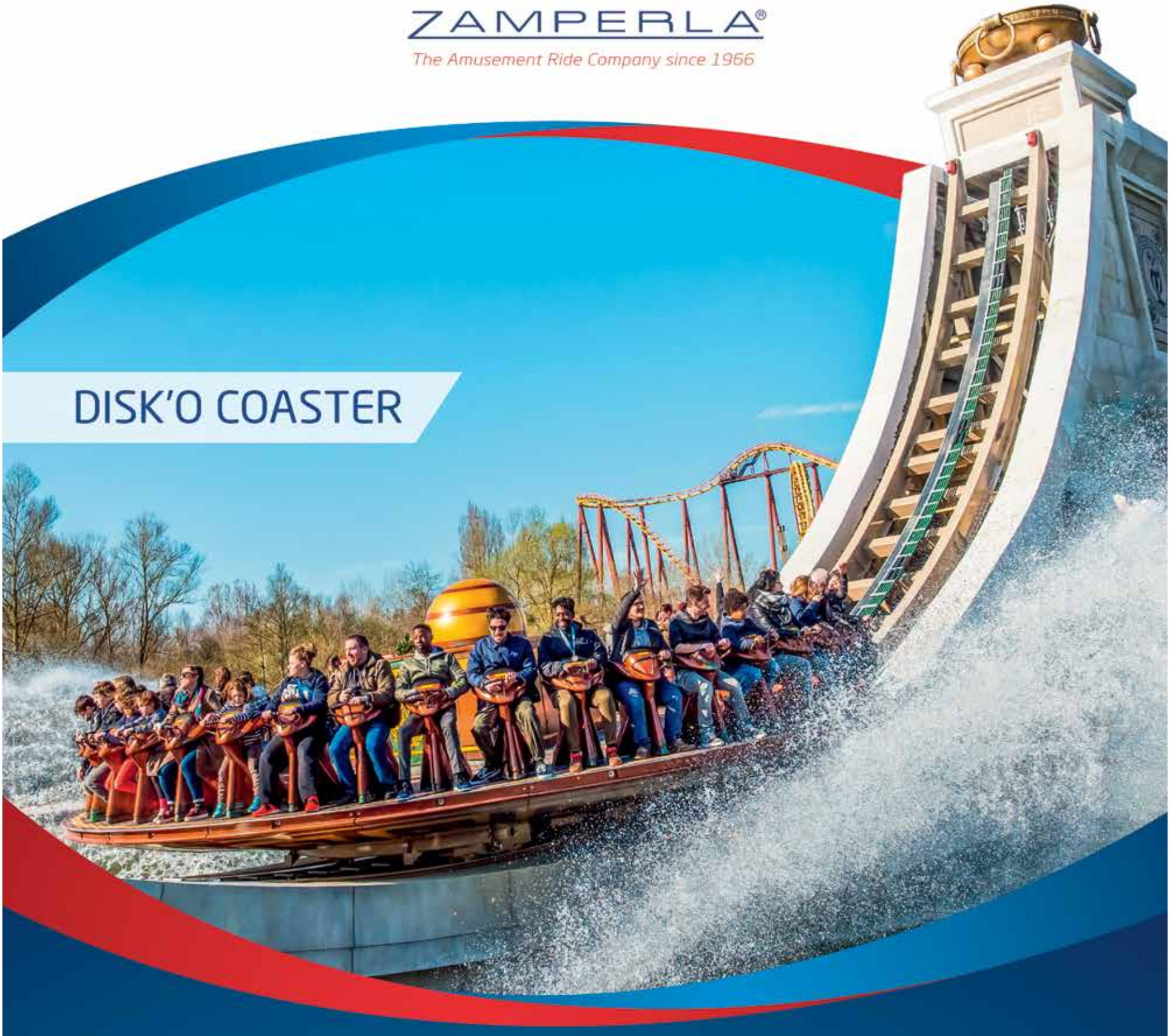
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